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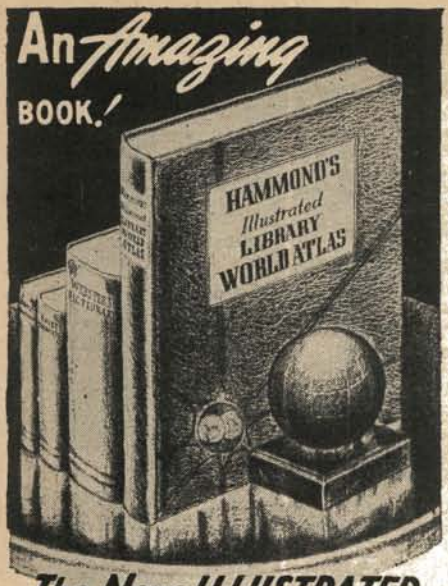

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FEATURES

AMBASSADOR TO THE COSMOS, by Russell Maloney....15
THE LITERARY SAMPLER....18
WHAT *SRL* REVIEWERS ARE GIVING FOR CHRISTMAS....20
"THE ESSENCE OF GANDHIISM," by Louis Fischer....21
THE WORD AS MIRROR, by Jean-Paul Sartre....25

REVIEWS

BOOK	AUTHOR	REVIEWER
LETTER FROM GROSVENOR SQUARE	John G. Winant	*Herbert Pell*....21
THE MEANING OF TREASON	Rebecca West	*Struthers Burt*....23
THE REPRIEVE	Jean Paul Sartre	*Richard McLaughlin*..24
WHAT AM I DOING HERE?	Abner Dean	*Thomas Sugrue*....27
THE STOIC	Theodore Dreiser	*John Lydenberg*....36
A CERTAIN RICH MAN	Vincent Sheean	*Catherine Meredith Brown*....38
FAR AND NEAR	Pearl Buck	*Hollis Alpert*....38
MISS JILL	Emily Hahn	*Ann F. Wolfe*....40
CLASS REPORT	John Purcell	*Merle Miller*....40
YANKEE PASHA	Edison Marshall	*Fletcher Pratt*....44
THE APPLE ORCHARD	John Kafka	*Catherine Meredith Brown*....44
HARP OF A THOUSAND STRINGS	H. L. Davis	*Thomas Caldecot Chubb*....46
THE ACHIEVEMENT OF T. S. ELIOT	F. O. Matthiessen	
THE FAMILY REUNION	T. S. Eliot	*Lloyd Frankenberg*..48
THE SHERWOOD ANDERSON READER	Edited by Paul Rosenfeld	*Robeson Bailey*....52
A MASQUE OF MERCY	Robert Frost	*Robert Hillyer*....54
HYMN TO WRECKAGE	Robert McKinney	*Gerard Previn Meyer*.56
THE AMAZING YEAR	Selden Rodman	*Fleming MacLiesh*..58
THE KID	Conrad Aiken	*David Daiches*....60
OTHER SKIES	John Ciardi	*Gerard Previn Meyer*.60
BRIDGES OVER THE RHINE	Ernst Erich Noth	*Henry B. Kranz*....62
SOVIET RUSSIA SINCE THE WAR	Dr. Hewlett Johnson	*Sidney S. Harcave*..62
ADMIRAL HALSEY'S STORY	William F. Halsey and J. Bryan, III	*Robert A. Low*....64
THE STAINLESS STEEL KIMONO	Elliot Chaze	*Harrison Smith*....66
YOUR NEWSPAPER	9 Nieman Fellows	*Harry T. Saylor*....74
PARIS HERALD: THE INCREDIBLE NEWSPAPER	Al Laney	*Jack Rackliffe*....74
OUR EMERGENT CIVILIZATION	Ruth Nanda Anshen	*Rushton Coulborn*...82
THE POLICE AND MINORITY GROUPS	Joseph D. Lohman	*Eduard C. Lindeman*.83
THE MISINTERPRETATION OF MAN	Paul Roubiczek	*Asher Brynes*....84
THE STRANGE LIFE OF LADY BLESSINGTON	Michael Sadleir	*George Dangerfield*..89
THE FIRST CAPTAIN	Gerald W. Johnson	*Fletcher Pratt*....91
THE GAY GENIUS	Lin Yutang	*Mark Gayn*....92

DEPARTMENTS

TRADE WINDS, by Bennett Cerf....8
EDITORIAL....28
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR....31
THE FINE ARTS, by James Thrall Soby....34
MY CURRENT READING, by Joseph W. Alsop....38
LITERARY I.Q....46
LITERARY CRYPT....66
SEEING THINGS, by John Mason Brown....68
THE NEW RECORDINGS, by Edward Tatnall Canby....72
THE CRIMINAL RECORD....88
THE PHOENIX NEST, by William Rose Benét....94
DOUBLE-CROSTIC NO. 715....98

THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE, published weekly by the Saturday Review Associates, Inc., 25 West 45th Street, New York 19, N. Y. Harrison Smith, President; J. R. Cominsky, Executive Vice President and Treasurer; Norman Cousins, Vice President; Amy Loveman, Secretary; Lilian Grannon, Assistant Treasurer; Robert A. Low, Advertising Manager; Bert Garmise, Circulation Director; Arthur Bodenheimer, Assistant Circulation Director. Subscriptions $6 a year; $7 in Canada. Member of Audit Bureau of Circulations. Printed in U. S. Vol. XXX, No. 49, December 6, 1947. Entered as second class matter at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Indexed in the "Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature." Entire issue, Copyright, 1947, by Saturday Review Associates, Inc.

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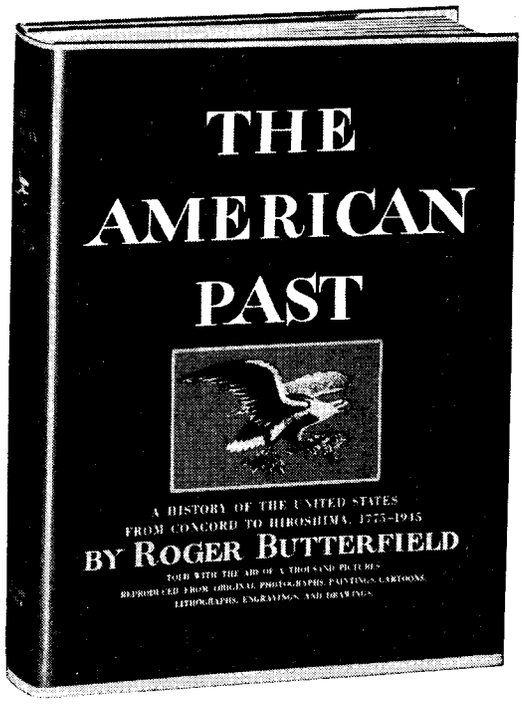

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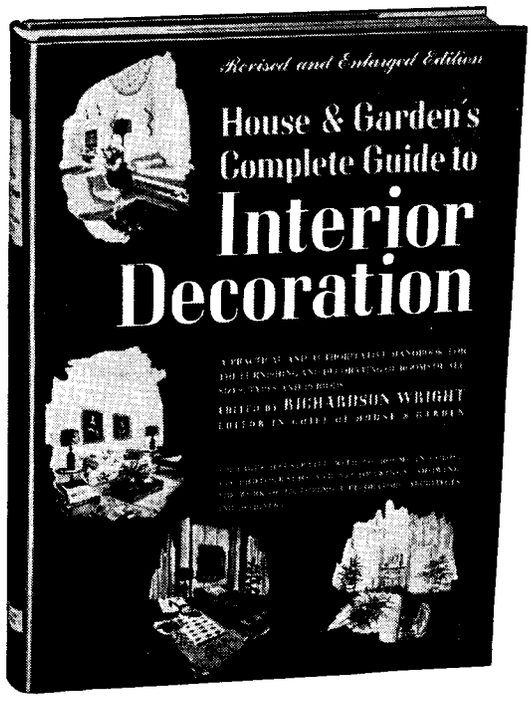

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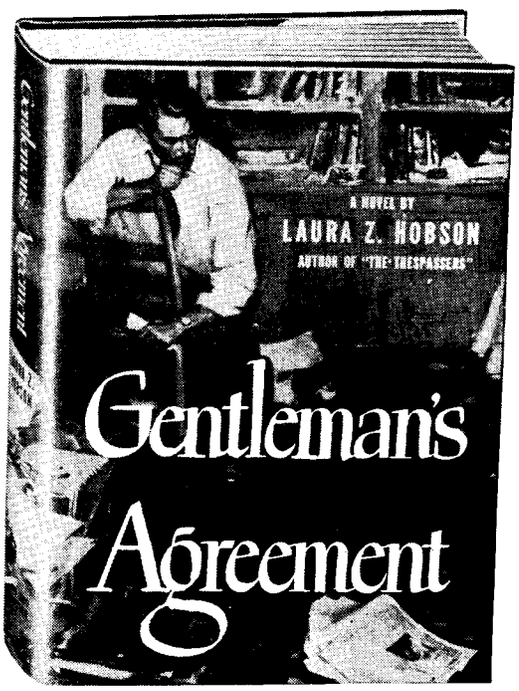

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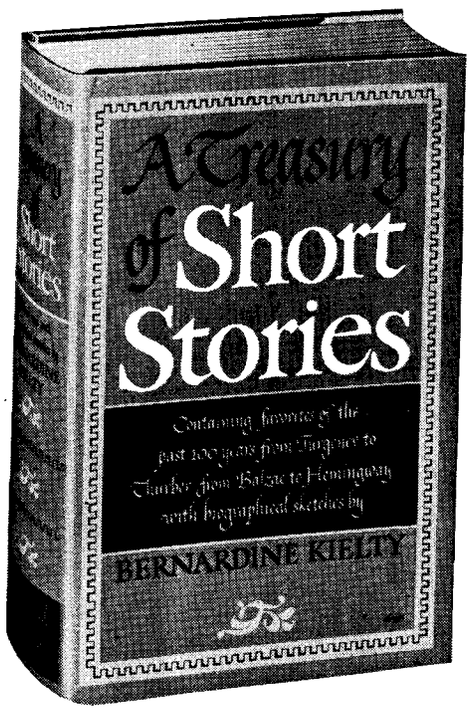

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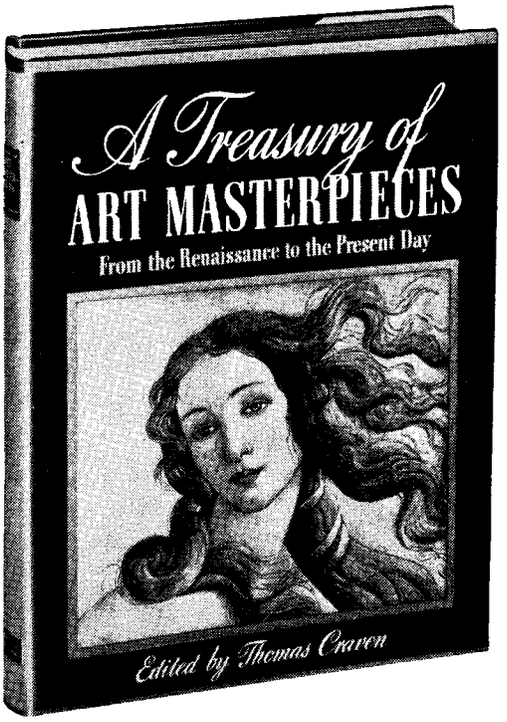

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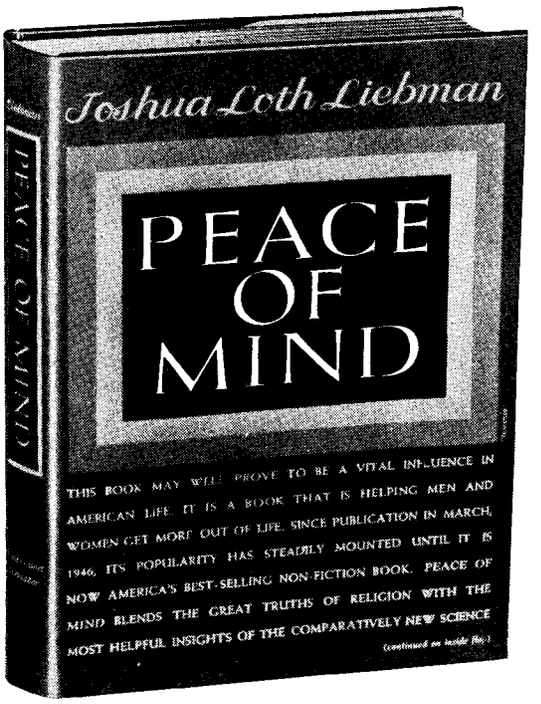
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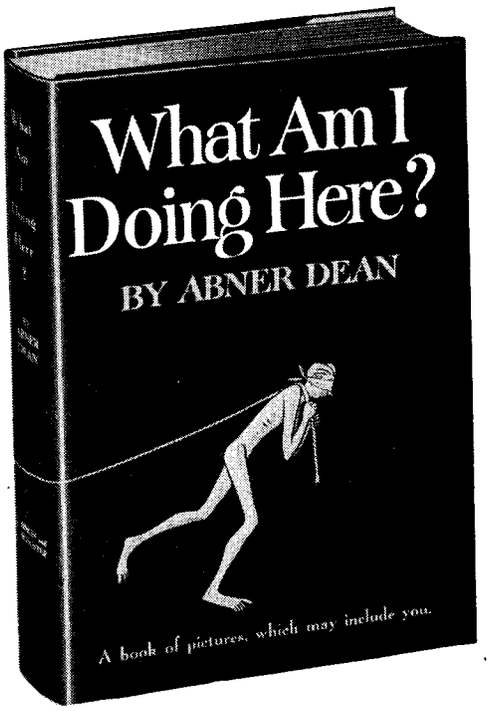

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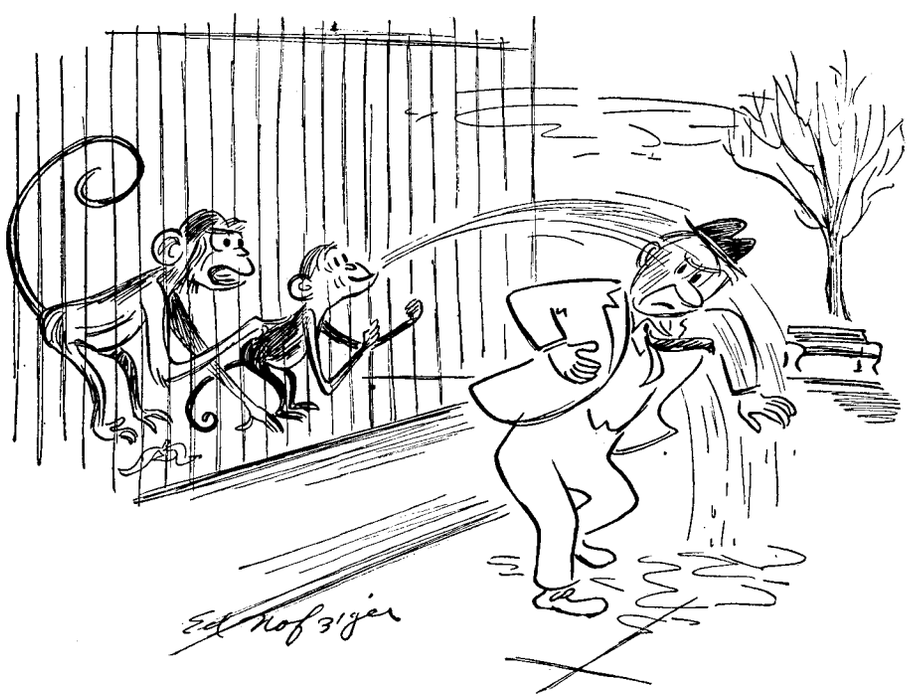
A couple of the luckiest gents in America are the Wall Street promoters who floated a fat issue of common stock in a non-existent motion picture company a few years ago, and then ran smack into the SEC, who ordered, "Actually build and operate that studio, or else. . . ." They fitted out an abandoned studio and hoped to satisfy the authorities with a few low-budget quickies. To their amazement the quickies coined money, the promoters settled permanently in Hollywood, and today their company is making millions . . .

ONE OF THE most successful magnates of our time made his first big killing in the glove business. In those days, the most expensive gloves were imported from Europe, and the duty was as high as the total cost of manufacture. As I heard the story, the magnate imported a quarter of a million dollars' worth of gloves at one time—but gave peculiar shipping instructions. All the *left* gloves were consigned to Boston; all the *right* ones to New Orleans. When the shipments arrived, nobody claimed them, and in due course they were auctioned off by the customs authorities with other unclaimed articles. Who on earth wanted a shipment of left gloves? Our hero picked them up in Boston for a fraction of what the duty would have cost. Then his agent did the same with the *right* gloves in New Orleans. And thus another great American fortune came into being. . . .

CARL GOERCH, of Raleigh, N. C., happened upon a fish story that I ran in Trade Winds many months ago. Those of you who possess unfortunate memories may recall that it was all about John Haddock and Bess Porgy. His porpoise in life was to kipper out of the hands of bass, sailfish old Rufus Goldfish. Well, Mr. Goerch read halibut it, and dashed off a comparable little number of his own that in fairness I should print, much as it grebes me.

It's a story [says Mr. G.] about Bob White, whom I've known ever since he was in didappers.



"This is Be-Kind-to-People Week! Now stop squirting water on passersby!"

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Bob was a baseball player, and the last time I saw him he was pigeon for the New York Yankees. He had the whole crowd raven about him, and the opposing batters would quail every time he would tern and throw the ball.

The umpire, whose name was Harry, was continually robin the Yankees. Yes, Harry was terrible. But Bob never complained. He merely said: "Canary be blind?" To which another player replied, "Well, he coot be." Still another one said, "He ought to be put in jail, under lark and key."

Even when the fans would owl with rage, Bob White only smiled as he tried to swallow his disappointment.

One day the umpire even tried to run away with one of the bases. Bob White shouted: "Here! You bring that canvasback!" But Bucky Harris, manager of the Yankees, said, "Don't worry, Bob, I linnet to him."

In order to calm himself, Bob took out an apple and started to parrot. He had a wonderful appetite. I've seen him take a lot of food, wrapped in a large piece of cardboard, and eat the whole business—cardinal—and stork serenely off to get his watch out of hawk.

But enough of this foolishness. The world is an awful mess. The problems of today merit our thoughtful and religious consideration. So let osprey.

Sehr Huebsch, Mr. Goerch. Verily, the pun is mightier than the sword. . . .

ROOTS. . . . Bruce and Beatrice Gould, editors of the *Ladies' Home Journal*, and poll-specialist George Gallup and his wife, Ophelia, are neighbors today near Princeton. All four of them attended the University of Iowa together in their undergraduate days. . . . Not far from the Goulds and the Gallups, George and Laura Stevens make their home. George spends three days every week in the Lippincott offices in Philadelphia, and two days in New York. He always leaves his house at the same time, however, because his trains arrive at Princeton Junction at the same moment! . . . The Stevens's romance blossomed in the editorial sanctum of W. W. Norton. For their first date, George took Laura to a ball game between the New York Giants and the Cincinnati Reds. At the end of the sixth inning she inquired, "Which one is Boston?" That was the last game they attended together. . . . In 1913, the newly appointed editor of a French literary review addressed his first official letter to Marcel Proust, who ignored it. The editor wrote again, asking if Proust had received his initial inquiry. This time Proust answered, and his letter is framed and hung in the proud editor's study today. It read: "If you sent a letter I probably got it. If I got it, I probably read it. If I read it, I'm sure I didn't like it." . . . When Thomas Wolfe's "Look

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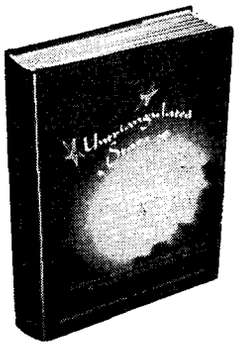

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"Testing! Testing! If nominated I will not run. If elected I will not serve . . . Testing! Testing!"

Homeward, Angel" became a best seller, Scribner's received a request from a Very Important Person for an autographed copy. Wolfe paced up and down the Scribner office for a full half hour, pondering what to say (in the same time he would write twenty pages of manuscript). Finally he seized a pen and wrote in the book, "Sincerely yours, Tom Wolfe." . . .

FLOYD NOURSE told Lee Shippey, of the *Los Angeles Times*, "In a big store I cover, the book buyer bought a hundred copies of a handsome new gift edition of Elizabeth Browning's 'Sonnets from the Portuguese.' The merchandise manager snorted, 'Cut that order to ten. There aren't a hundred Portuguese in this whole town.'" . . . Kenneth Roberts, writes John H. Treanor, was scheduled to give a lecture in the auditorium of the Boston Public Library one evening last winter. When the night arrived, there was a moderate snowstorm in progress. About five o'clock he phoned the library from his home in Maine and said that because of the storm he would have to cancel the engagement. "What!" exclaimed the librarian. "The man who wrote 'Northwest Passage' can't brave two inches of snow?" Mr. Roberts kept the appointment. . . . Natalie Metzger is convinced that the literary critic who asked the chess champion, "Led any good rooks lately?" would greet Congressman J. Parnell Thomas with, "Booked any good Reds lately?" . . .

NORMAN ROCKWELL was painting in his garden in Arlington, Vermont, one morning this summer when a car drove up, and three strangers alighted —a man and his wife and their sixteen-year-old daughter. They introduced themselves with no apology for their intrusion and examined the work in progress with a critical eye. Then the father turned to Rockwell and said, "My wife and I are spending the day with friends in Bennington. I'm leaving my daughter here with you. When I call for her this evening, we'll just see if she still wants to be a commercial artist!" . . . Fifty miles or so southwest of Arlington (near Hoosick Falls), on Route 22, there lives another artist, who has taken sudden fame and fortune very much in stride. Her name is Grandma Moses. Jim Rosenberg, lawyer, playwright, and distinguished painter in his own right, stopped in to see her on the way down from his Adirondack lodge. "What do they call *you?*" asked the gentle old lady, "Grandpa Rosenberg?" . . . He had with him one of his new pictures —an Adirondack scene done in impasto, and at her request, laid it on her lap. With her fingers she felt the thick daubs of paint and said smilingly, "I can see you're no Scotsman!

"You're the second visitor I've had today," she added. "There was a very nice young lady here to see me an hour ago. She told me, 'I am so discouraged with my own work. I feel like quitting.' I answered, 'I get discouraged sometimes too. But when I do, I just get up and dance a highland fling—like this.'"

Grandma Moses, eighty-seven years old, rose smartly and pirouetted across the room. BENNETT CERF.

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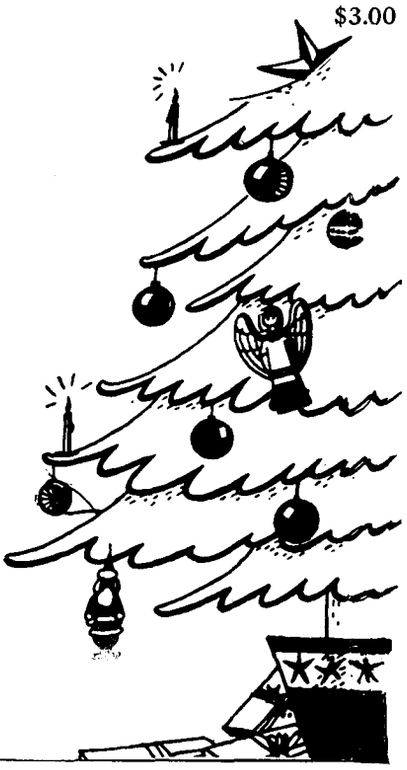

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The old, the new

DECEMBER, with its memories of Christmas past, its plans for Christmas present, and its hopes for Christmas to come, is always a nostalgic time – a time for dusting off memories along with the Christmas tree ornaments. It is also a time for finding new meanings in things so much a part of us that we have come to take them for granted. Which brings us to reminiscences and speculations about poetry.

Back in grade school, poetry meant three o'clock of a drowsy Wednesday afternoon, sun slanting dustily on red-brown desk tops, the acrid smell of chalk-dust mingling with the peppermint smell of paste, and the sound of forty voices chanting in time to the rap of the ruler against the teacher's desk:

> If *you* can *keep* your *head* when *all* a-*bout* you
> Are *los*-ing *theirs* and *blam*-ing *it* on *you* . . .

Our principal believed that poetry was an admirable method for instilling Fine and Noble Sentiments in the impressionable young. We recited poems about Duty and Responsibility, about Making the Most of Opportunities, and only occasionally—a bit of frivolity —about October's Bright Blue Weather. This discouraged most of the students. But not us. In fact, so carried away were we that in eighth grade we became inspired to write a manifesto on the Art of Poetry. This we recently unearthed in an attic trunk, and we offer, without charge, its final section – a categorical summary of directives to aspiring poets:

1. Do not use trite words and phrases. Try to keep your expression fresh.
2. Do not write about mournful or depressing subjects.
3. Above all, don't think it is difficult to write poetry. It is the easiest thing in the world, given a little inspiration and effort.

Many things have changed since then. For one, we've read what other authorities – like Sir Philip Sidney, Wordsworth, and T. S. Eliot – have had to say on the subject. We've learned to bandy "objective correlatives" and "emotion recollected in tranquillity" as glibly as the next person. (Which is pretty glibly, if the next person happens to be an editor.) And we have come to realize how tremendously difficult the act of poetry is. If we were ever to forget, our own sheaf of accumulated rejection slips would remind us. Acceptable verses – sometimes very acceptable verses – can be produced according to our eighth-grade prescription, if a measure of practice is added to the formula. But great poetry seems to require something more. The exact nature of that "something more" has been endlessly debated and defined, but its presence is unmistakable. It may make you feel as it did Emily Dickinson: as though your whole body were so cold no fire could ever warm you; as though the top of your head were taken off. Or, like A. E. Housman, you may find it imprudent to let a line of poetry stray into your mind while shaving. But wherever it hits you – pit of stomach, throat, top of head – if it's there, you know it.

Believing this, we're proud to be part of a firm that has published Housman, Frost, de la Mare, Cummings and Sandburg. And we're equally proud to be introducing poets less well known, in whose work we recognize the "something more." In the first eight months of 1947, we published four of these new writers – all very different, and all real poets.

Louis Coxe, for instance, writes in THE SEA FARING with the spare grandeur of his New England coast. He writes of the sea, of night fears aboard a convoy, of the love that conquers war and gives the lie to death. And he charts a course for man today, who, battling indifference, must

> move into the storm's
> Motionless core and easy in that zone
> Of quiet take his trouble in his arms.

Future anthologies will probably identify England's Sidney Keyes as a war poet, due to the fact that World War II effectively prevented his achieving any other classification by killing him at the age of twenty-one. His COLLECTED POEMS are colored with death, but their sober tapestry is shot through with the bright thread of love. Keyes wanted to understand death, and he wanted profoundly and passionately to live. Reading his poems, you will know why Herbert Read has called him "the subtlest, the truest, the most open representative of a generation we have yet to welcome and understand."

Samuel Greenberg died young, too – the victim of another kind of struggle: the struggle to master a new language (Austrian-born, he came to America as a child); to overcome the poverty of his East Side home; to keep writing while tuberculosis wasted him. He found in his dream world, so different from the mundane "vegetable universe," something real and beautiful. His POEMS range from the simple lyric to the complex poem of mystical vision. And he knew the poet's function in this or any time:

> I live in an age
> Where the age lives alone,
> And lonesome doth it rage
> Where the bard dare not come.

Howard Nemerov's questioning of the world is very different from Greenberg's. His collection, THE IMAGE AND THE LAW, is intellectual, close-packed. It compels through force of logic, and through the marvelous use of the surprising but inevitable word. He writes in his vision of *The Frozen City*

> I saw the sad patience of
> The people awaiting death
> (They crossed their bony legs,
> Their eyes stared, hostile and
> Bright as broken glass). The dream said:
> You must know that the period
> Of partial damage is complete:
> Nothing now will defray the costly
> Agonies of the sempiternal.

Enter December, 1947 – a time for remembering the old and listening to the new voices.

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The Saturday Review of Literature

James B. Conant— Ambassador to the Cosmos

RUSSELL MALONEY

—Helen Merrill.
Russell Maloney

IN THE relatively leisurely days before the war, James Bryant Conant, twenty-third president of Harvard University, used to take Saturday afternoon strolls about his collegiate domain. Out of nostalgia for the days when he was a chemist without an executive care in the world, Dr. Conant would now and then stop off at the Mallinckrodt Chemical Laboratory. It would be locked for the week end, but by tossing pebbles against the windows he could always succeed in arousing some one of his former colleagues and getting inside. Mrs. Conant once complained that this procedure was undignified. "Why shouldn't the president of the university have a key to every building?" she demanded. "Because I'd need a caddy to carry them all," the president told her. Conant's friends today feel that he could well do with some sort of cosmic caddy to help him shoulder his current responsibilities—the responsibilities of a university administrator, education reformer, international statesman, and atomic bomb expert. It comes almost as an anticlimax that he is mentioned in certain circles as a likely Republican dark-horse for 1948.

Conant's kindly and inquisitive facial expression and his stooped, scholarly stance may conceal unimaginable inner bubblings of pride, ambition, rebellion, and the lust for power; or on the other hand they may not. We will never know. Conant is a statesman. Before he was a statesman he was a university president, before he was a university president he was a professional scientist, and of course, long before he was any of these things he was a New Englander. Confronted with this reinforced facade, the biographer must get what comfort he can from the obvious fact that Conant never speaks out of impulse and always means just what he says. From time to time, he has said quite a lot, at that.

"Atomic Energy for Military Purposes" and "General Education in a Free Society"—the so-called "Smyth Report" and "Harvard Report," respectively—came from the presses a few months apart, in 1945. Both acknowledged the indispensable services of James Bryant Conant as adviser and coordinator. Certainly there must be unexplored depths in a mind capable of concerning itself simultaneously with possible improvements in the means of educating the young human, and the development of a weapon to eradicate human life forever from this earth. To be sure, the inescapable fact of war forced thousands of equally prominent citizens into equally contradictory positions; the striking thing about Conant's dilemma is his cheerful refusal to admit that it *is* a dilemma. On the subject of the atomic bomb, a matter which has turned almost an entire generation of theoretical scientists into street-corner evangelists and journalistic alarm-sounders, he once remarked (before the members of the Cleveland Chamber of Commerce and their luncheon guests): "Now it would be a bold man, indeed, who maintained that he had a complete and 100 per cent foolproof answer to the question: 'What shall we do with the atomic bomb?' "

—From "Boston and the Boston Legend."
Harvard Hall, Harvard Yard.

IN THE same placid and tough-minded vein, he elsewhere addresses parents on the subject of general education: "Parents who expect miracles worked upon their children must be reminded of the limitations imposed by nature." Regrettable as this statement may be from the strictly stylistic point of view—a miracle, after all, always transcends the limitations imposed by nature—it has, under the circumstances, a reassuring ring. The future offers no extremes; it is pessimistic to suppose that we will all shortly be blown to hell, optimistic to expect our children to get all A's and B's on their report cards. Alarmists and perfectionists are at once rebuked.

Much of Conant's determined calm and cheerfulness may be traced to the fact that, as a man of affairs, collegiate or international, he has operated only during times of extreme calamity. He succeeded Dr. A. Lawrence Lowell as president of Harvard in 1933. There was something faintly improbable about this—the financially inexperienced young chemist taking charge of one of the world's great universities at a time when endowments were as scarce as Republican office-holders—and a rumor arose that Conant was a stop-gap, that he was to resign in favor of a famous industrialist as soon as that industrialist could

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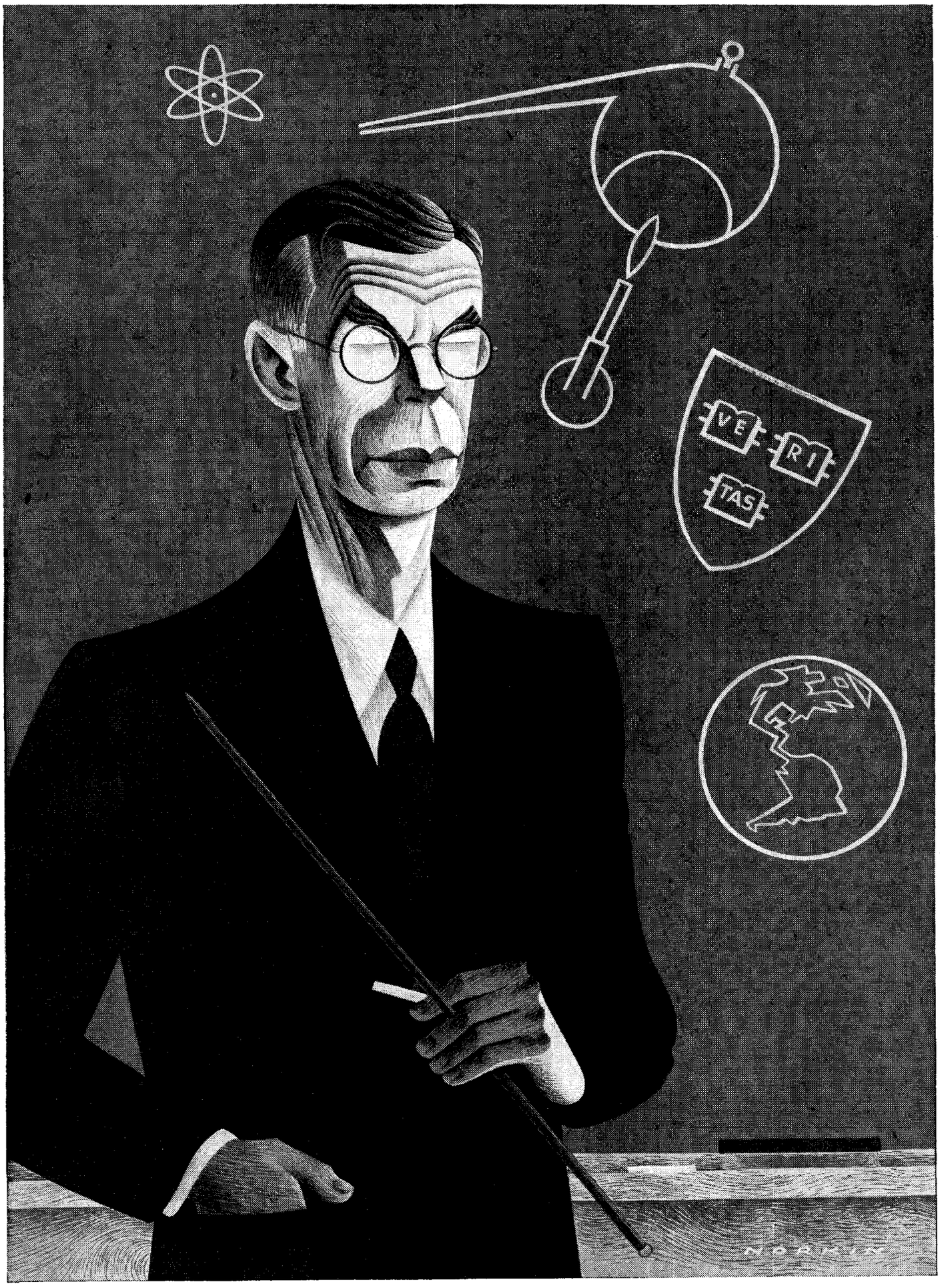

"The striking thing about James Bryant Conant's dilemma is his cheerful refusal to admit that it is a dilemma."

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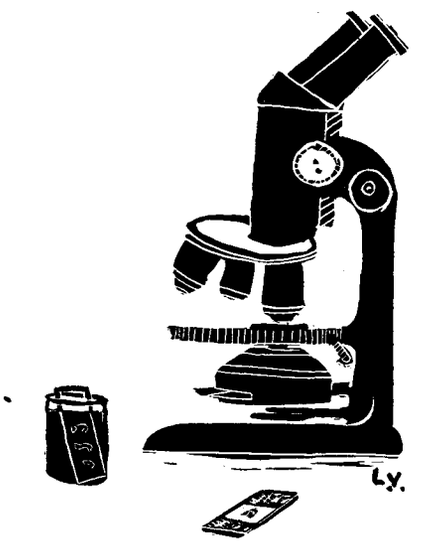
see ahead to better times. As far as anybody can now ascertain, there was nothing in the rumor.

When they ask you to be president of Harvard you don't say "No." Nevertheless, in accepting the office, Conant put a deliberate and definite end to a career which would certainly have made him one of the great chemists of his day. Famous already for an important contribution to the understanding of the chemistry of hemoglobin, he was well advanced on a study of chlorophyll, the substance which enables plant life to get nourishment from sunlight. Conant still dips into what the advanced men in his field are publishing, but he says after fourteen years he cannot claim a practical knowledge of the recent developments. However, he points out that his value as a coordinator of the Manhattan Project was due in part to being a scientist, with a scientist's vocabulary and ways of thought. "I'm not a physicist, and I don't know much about physics," he recently told a layman with whom he was discussing the atomic bomb. "But I can talk to those fellows and understand what they tell me, and you can't." Here is a practical application of Conant's theory that every student should get acquainted with some one of the sciences simply for the sake of acquiring a smattering of the language of science.

It must have surprised Conant to be selected at the age of forty for the heavy responsibilities of running Harvard University; but the trustees of the Roxbury Latin School were probably even more surprised. A few months before, Conant had been proposed to fill a vacancy among their number, and he had been rejected as being too young and obscure.

ANY COLLEGE, at any given time, is, in the considered opinion of its graduates, going to hell in a basket. In 1933, however, Harvard really was in a difficult position. The days of the expanding economy appeared to be over; the cycle of endowment and building and expansion of the student body and further endowment had already slowed down and must soon stop. President Lowell's last big expansive project, the "house plan," financed by the relentlessly benevolent Edward S. Harkness, had put the undergraduate body into seven newly-constructed housing units on the banks of the Charles, leaving the honor of residence within the Yard—the plot which lesser colleges call the campus — to freshmen and undesirables who were not admitted to one of the houses. The students had got themselves so entangled with the ritual of English university life that there was a serious effort to organize, on the broad bosom of the astonished Charles River, an imitation of the English style of crew racing, in which the shells line up one after the other and try to bump the one ahead. The kitchen of Lowell House was provided with a special ice-cream mold so that on special occasions dessert could be a slab of vanilla with the Lowell coat of arms outlined in a contrasting flavor.

None of these goings-on appeared to strike the new president as terribly glamorous—probably because Conant tends to regard the whole process of acquiring an A.B. as incidental to further and more specialized training. He is polite about the lad who is going to leave college after four years and enter some business. He strives earnestly to provide within the four-year



course what he obviously regards as a capsule education. Hence the emphasis in the Harvard Report on "courses which are concerned with general relationships and values, not with the learning and the technicalities of the specialist." This view of the average, unaspiring student has seemed a little sterile to at least one qualified critic, President - Emeritus Henry Noble McCracken of Vassar. He sounded off, in an obscure nook of the Sunday *New York Times*, demanding: "What is all this post-haste and romage in the land about general education? All undergraduate education is quite general enough,—that is, it is not specific enough to be of any particular importance to anyone but the one who has learned it."

It has been said that Harvard is the only really democratic college in the country, in the sense that it tolerates no campus snobbery but merely accepts the social values of the outside world. The big men on the campus are not the deserving athletes or the apple-cheeked and bustling extroverts who go in for "activities"; they are the unmistakably lantern-jawed products of generations of Back Bay intermarriages. To study changes within Harvard during Conant's tenure would not, then, tell us much about Conant. The political trends among the faculty, ranging from fascist to communist, the fact that a colored lad now and then is received into a good club — such things are symptomatic of changes in the outer world as they affect Harvard. So also, to a degree, is Conant himself. The Harvard of even a generation ago would never have sought out for its president a man of Conant's matter-of-fact and modest background.

NONE of Conant's direct forbears was a Harvard graduate. The first American Conant was one of the founders of Salem, Massachusetts. Later Conants made shoes; James Conant's father was a photo-engraver. Both he and his wife were militant liberals and pacifists. Their son, when he was just out of college, volunteered to solicit subscriptions for a new liberal weekly called *The New Republic*. Not only that, he marched in a woman's suffrage parade. The years have not quelled Conant's tendency to political liberalism. He voted for Al Smith in 1928, and from this fact it seems safe to infer that he voted for Franklin Roosevelt in 1932, although at that time *Who's Who* listed him as a Republican. The old Adam broke out again in 1943, when the president of Harvard contributed to *The Atlantic Monthly* an article entitled "Wanted: American Radicals." This included, in black and white, the author's opinion that all private property ought to revert to the state once every generation. This statement brought forth a chorus of well-bred squeaks from a majority of the various fellows, overseers, trustees, faculty members, and vintage graduates who uphold the Harvard tradition. The *Atlantic* opened its pages to a rebuttal written by Mr. Arthur A. Ballantine, Assistant Secretary of the Treasury under Herbert Hoover, who told Dr. Conant some plain truths about the necessity for the incentive to private enterprise, and there the matter finally rested. No one now mentions it.

Conant spoke out loud and clear in 1934, when "Putzi" Hanfstaengl, Harvard '09, offered a thousand-dollar scholarship to send a Harvard man to Germany for a year's study. He refused the gift, mentioning Hanfstaengl's connection with "a political party which has inflicted damage on the universities of Germany through measures which have struck at principles we believe to be fundamental to universities throughout the world."

(*Continued on page 86*)

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THE LITERARY SAMPLER

EXCERPTS AND JOTTINGS FROM NEW AND FORTHCOMING BOOKS

A Drop of Treason . . .

A MAN'S DEMANDS for liberty must at some point challenge the limitations the state imposes on the individual for the sake of the mass. If he is to carry on the national tradition he must wrestle with those who, speaking in its name, desire to crystallize it at the point reached by the previous generation. In any case national life itself must frequently exasperate him, because it is the medium in which he is expressing himself, and every craftsman or artist is repelled by the resistance of his medium to his will. All men should have a drop or two of treason in their veins, if the nations are not to go soft like so many sleepy pears. Yet to be a traitor is most miserable. All the men described in this book were sad as they stood their trials, not only because they were going to be punished. They would have been sad even if they had never been brought to justice. They had forsaken the familiar medium; they had trusted themselves to the mercies of those who had no reason to care for them; knowing their custodians' indifference, they had lived for long in fear; and they were aware that they had thrown away their claim on those who might naturally have felt affection for them. Strangers, as King Solomon put it, were filled with their wealth, and their labors were in the house of a stranger, and they mourned at the last when their flesh and body were consumed.

—*From "The Meaning of Treason," by Rebecca West (Viking).*

Something Beyond

WHITMAN WAS a country boy before he became a young man of the streets, and he returned to this open-air life, in the days of his invalidism, after the Civil War, at Timber Creek. He loved the old agricultural order of the world that he was bred in—he was never as deeply at home in the industrial world—and he hoped to see farming increase in America, as he wrote in one of his prose pieces: "Its gains are the only ones on which God seems to smile." No doubt this was the reason he was drawn to Millet more than to any other painter. Meanwhile, until he was forty or more he rambled occasionally over Long Island, where he had once edited a newspaper and taught country schools, at Babylon, Jamaica, Whitestone, Woodbury, and Flushing, boarding round at neighboring farms and always more impressed by the self-reliance and native good sense of the people. In the old-fashioned schoolhouses, fastened with a padlock, with a small chimney rising through the eaves, where he taught the three R's, with a little geography and "speaking," Whitman picked up incidents that he used in some of his early stories, intended to inculcate temperance, fidelity, or thrift. He liked to read the great poets in the open air within sound of the sea, and at Coney Island, in mild seasons, on the long, bare, unfrequented beach, he raced up and down the sand, after a swim, declaiming Homer and Shakespeare to the surf and the gulls. He first read the "Iliad" thoroughly in a sheltered hollow of the rocks, in the full presence of nature, under the sun, with the far-spreading landscape and vistas and the sea rolling in, as he read Dante in an old wood near the shore, and the sight of a ship that was passing under full sail had aroused his first impulse to write in early boyhood. He had longed to describe this ship exactly. The shore, where the water married the land, symbolized for him the blending of the real and the ideal, for each became part of the other on this wavering line, and he remembered feeling once that he must write a book expressing what he called "this liquid mystic theme." Then it came to him that the seashore should rather be a general influence with him, a pervading gauge or tally in his composition. Whitman's poems later abounded in sea-images, "leaves of salt lettuce" and "scales from shining rocks" and waves "reproachfully rolling sands and drift," while the rhythms of the sea were in his blood. The poetic form that he gradually evolved was oceanic, as he sometimes said, with verses that recalled the waves, rising and falling, often sunny, now and then wild with storm, scarcely two alike in length or measure. These verses suggested constant motion, and he wished them to leave an impression not of anything fixed and finished but of something "beyond."

—*From "The Times of Melville and Whitman," by Van Wyck Brooks (Dutton).*

The Eternal Tribute

UNTIL THE VERY LAST, President Wilson refused to consider the possibility of the treaty's rejection, and when the blow fell it found his heart unguarded. I saw him soon afterward, and the pallor of death lay on his face. I sat with him miserably, fumbling for words of comfort, but it was as though I had not been in the room. All the while his bloodless lips moved continuously, as if framing new arguments and forming new appeals. Only as I was leaving did he look at me seeingly, his eyes filled with an anguish such as I trust never to see again. "If only I were not helpless," he whispered. . . .

There was no letdown while in the White House, but behind the walls of

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the S Street home there were frequent surrenders to the tragedy of his thoughts. One visit saw him cheerful and composed, and then the next would find him silent, his eyes staring into space. I thought for a time that he was putting himself on the rack of the past, torturing himself with speculations as to what could or should have been done, but when I mentioned this, he shook his head.

"No," he said, "I am not brooding over what might have been. It is only the future that concerns me. What is going to happen now? Something *must* happen, or else a second world war is inevitable." . . .

Only a few short years before he had companioned with the peoples of the world in a great crusade, and now he seemed to feel that he walked alone, the shattered evangel of a lost cause.

A change, thank God, came before the end. At sight of Woodrow Wilson in the procession to dedicate the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, a cheer rose from the gathered thousands, a great cheer that spread and swelled and never died until the gaunt, crippled figure disappeared behind the door of his home. As he heard that mighty chorus, tears rolled down his wasted cheeks and washed away his loneliness forever. He refused to believe that it was a personal tribute in any sense, holding that it was the cause they cheered, and that it meant a people's return to faith. It was this warming belief that he took to his heart, holding it ever closer and closer. There were days of depression, to be sure, due to the march of his illness, but his eyes never lost the serenity of a deeply religious conviction.

"It will come," he said over and over. "Yes, it will come."

—*From "Rebel at Large," by George Creel (Putnam).*

WHEN YOU COULD TELL FROM PA'S OLD PANTS WHAT YOUR NEW SCHOOL SUIT WAS GOIN' T' LOOK LIKE.
NOW STAND STILL A MINUTE MAMA WANTS TO SEE SOMETHING
GAAR WILLIAMS

From the book, "Among the Folks in History," by Gaar Williams (Rand McNally).

"Hand Me Downs."

The World of Icy Death

WHEN I WOKE there was a light shining into my room from the old woman's window; it's not unlike the distant headlight of some far-off approaching train. Perhaps the light started the dream. Then I put my hand back again, down by my side, and just lay there. I felt numb and cold all over and the dream was still so real, I was shivering. I dreamed I was on a train winding around mountains, going upgrade. I thought it was Switzerland but at the same time the landscape was more like the Rockies. The engine was chugging painfully and there was deep snow everywhere. I was lying flat on top of a baggage car in deep snow, in a light summer suit, with bare feet. In the dream I was thoroughly alert to my predicament. I would have to get down. The train would go through a tunnel and somewhere along the route a slide of snow would cover me or knock me off into a deep gorge. In my bare feet I started to clamber down; in the dream, the icy iron stung. My skin seemed to stick to it but I swung over and, dangling, tried to get a toe hold. Though I was filled with the shock of my peril, I saw clearly the dazzling loveliness of the snowy mountain spiked with dark firs. I managed to get hold of the baggage car door and rapped frantically to open; it sounded hollow. After an agony of uncertainty, the door opened: someone from inside seemed to have helped me, just as the train made a great curve and I was about to swing out over the gorge. I crawled inside gratefully; it wasn't a baggage car but a third-class European wagon. It was light inside although there were no windows. And the light came as through the fog of an early morning. There were no lamps either. Just foggy early morning light. Every seat was taken. I could see the gray shapes of passengers asleep and one young boy was even standing bolt upright in the aisle with his eyes half closed; his eyelashes looked frosted. It was cold inside as it had been above, and, as I looked around trying to find where I could put myself, I saw that all the sleepers were young and all had bandages on their heads or had their feet propped up in huge bloody wads. The train lurched; I put my hand out to steady myself and touched a young man slouched in a nearby seat. His skin was so icy I shuddered, and knew, the way you do in dreams, that they were all dead. I woke up in horror to find the old woman's light shining calmly into the room.

—*From "Somewhere the Tempest Fell," by Josephine Herbst (Scribner's).*

Sovereign Spigot

GRANDFATHER'S matter-of-fact cider barrel achieved proportions the temperance movement might resent. It was on a hot summer day when Grandfather took a load of tomatoes to Lewiston, and left two hired men mowing out the front-field swale with hand-scythes. These two worthies mowed for a time, and then commented mutually on the desirability of refreshment. This led to speculation on whether or not Grandfather had some cider. The speculation

(*Continued on page* 78)

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What SRL Reviewers Are Giving for Christmas:

ROSEMARY BENET	The American Past (Roger Butterfield)	Back Home (Bill Mauldin)	The Semi-Attached Couple (Emily Eden)	Bible Stories in Woodcut—Helen Slocum Estabrook & Susan Nichols Pulsifer	Fireside Book of Ballads (M. Boni)
WILLIAM ROSE BENET	Song of Robin Hood (Edited by Anne Malcolmsen: Illustrated by Virginia Lee Burton)	The Island: A Cavalcade of England (Francis Brett Young)	Untriangulated Stars (Letters of Edwin Arlington Robinson to Harry de Forest Smith, 1890-1905)	Collected Poems (Alfred Noyes)	The Holy Bible Containing the Old and New Testaments (King James Version)
JOHN MASON BROWN	The American Past (Roger Butterfield)	Postscript to Yesterday (Lloyd Morris)	Back Home (Bill Mauldin)	Tales of the South Pacific (James E. Michener)	The Last of the Provincials (Maxwell Geismar)
ASHER BRYNES	Dahl's Brave New World (Francis W. Dahl)	The Story of American Railroads (Stewart H. Holbrook)	The Wonderful Adventures of Nils (Selma Lagerlof)	Sailing to Win (Robert N. Bavier, Jr.)	The Gay Genius (Lin Yutang)
STRUTHERS BURT	Across the Wide Missouri (Bernard DeVoto)	The Sealed Verdict (Lionel Shapiro)	Toward What Bright Land (Walter Gilkyson)	The Meaning of Treason (Rebecca West)	The American Past (Roger Butterfield)
BENNETT CERF	Inside U.S.A. (John Gunther)	The American Past (Roger Butterfield)	Postscript to Yesterday (Lloyd Morris)	The Fireside Book of Folk Songs (Edited by Margaret Bradford Boni)	Addams and Evil (Charles Addams)
NANCY G. CHAIKIN	The Sherwood Anderson Reader (Edited by Paul Rosenfeld)	F.D.R.: His Personal Letters (Edited by Elliott Roosevelt)	The American Songbag (Carl Sandburg)	The Thurber Carnival (James Thurber)	The James Family (F. O. Matthiessen)
RICHARD A. CORDELL	The Proper Bostonians (Cleveland Amory)	The Great Gatsby (F. Scott Fitzgerald)	Amiable Autocrat (Eleanor M. Tilton)	Human Destiny (Lecomte du Nouy)	Back Home (Bill Mauldin)
IRWIN EDMAN	One Fine Day (Molly Panter-Downes)	Great Morning (Sir Osbert Sitwell)	Postscript to Yesterday (Lloyd Morris)	The Prime Minister (Anthony Trollope)	Journals of Andre Gide (Edited by Justin O'Brien)
ARTHUR C. FIELDS	The Last Days of Hitler (H. R. Trevor-Roper)	Knock on Any Door (Willard Motley)	A Study of History (Arnold J. Toynbee)	Yank: The GI Story of the War	The James Family (F. O. Matthiessen)
LOUIS FISCHER	Speaking Frankly (James F. Byrnes)	Gentleman's Agreement (Laura Z. Hobson)	I Want to be Like Stalin (George S. Counts)	Peace or Anarchy (Cord Meyer, Jr.)	Richer by Asia (Edmond Taylor)
MAXWELL GEISMAR	Leonardo da Vinci (Sigmund Freud Edited by A. A. Brill)	The Times of Melville and Whitman (Van Wyck Brooks)	Journals of Andre Gide (Edited by Justin O'Brien)	Europe Without Baedeker (Edmund Wilson)	Basic Judaism (Milton Steinberg)
SARA HENDERSON HAY	The Stairway of Surprise (William Rose Benet)	Appreciation: Painting, Poetry & Prose (Leo Stein)	Studies in Murder (Edmond Pearson)	The Swiss Family Robinson (J. R. Wyss)	Mr. Blandings Builds His Dream House (Eric Hodgins)
GORDDEN LINK	A Study of History (Arnold J. Toynbee)	The James Family (F. O. Matthiessen)	The Times of Melville and Whitman (Van Wyck Brooks)	When the Mountain Fell (C.-F. Ramuz)	The Indefinite River (Preston Schoyer)
WILLIAM S. LYNCH	The American Past (Roger Butterfield)	The Harder They Fall (Budd Schulberg)	The Living Novel (V. S. Pritchett)	The Middle of the Journey (Lionel Trilling)	Lord Weary's Castle (Robert Lowell)
RICHARD McLAUGHLIN	The Innocent Eye (Herbert Read)	Martin Chuzzlewit (Charles Dickens. Illustrated by Mary Petty)	The Reprieve (Jean-Paul Sartre)	Tortilla Flat (John Steinbeck. Illustrated by Peggy Worthington)	Postscript to Yesterday (Lloyd Morris)
RICHARD L. NEUBERGER	The Journals of Francis Parkman (Edited by Mason Wade)	The Big Sky (A. B. Guthrie, Jr.)	The Great Forest (Richard G. Lillard)	Inside U.S.A. (John Gunther)	Wildwood Wisdom (Ellsworth Jaeger)
ROBERT PICK	Under the Volcano (Malcolm Lowry)	The Heretics (Humphrey Slater)	Albert Schweitzer (George Seaver)	Christ Stopped at Eboli (Carlo Levi)	Another Day, Another Dollar (John T. Winterich)
BEN RAY REDMAN	Peter Abelard (Helen Waddell)	Middlemarch (George Eliot)	The Great Elector (Ferdinand Schevill)	Rimbaud (Enid Starkie)	The Pleasures of Peacock (Thomas Love Peacock)
ARTHUR SCHLESINGER, Jr.	Across the Wide Missouri (Bernard DeVoto)	The Last Days of Hitler (H. R. Trevor-Roper)	The Middle of the Journey (Lionel Trilling)	The New Yorker Book of War Pieces	Speaking Frankly (James F. Byrnes)
PAMELA TAYLOR	Postscript to Yesterday (Lloyd Morris)	Mrs. Egg and Other Americans (Edited by Wilson Follett)	Great Morning (Sir Osbert Sitwell)	The James Family (F. O. Matthiessen)	Addams and Evil (Charles Addams)
STANLEY VESTAL	Death on Horseback (Paul I. Wellman)	Western Words (Ramon F. Adams)	Frederic Remington, Artist of the Old West (Harold McCracken)	Picture Maker of the Old West (Clarence S. Jackson)	Across the Wide Missouri (Bernard DeVoto)
DIXON WECTER	American Memoir (Henry S. Canby)	Across the Wide Missouri (Bernard DeVoto)	Ordeal of the Union (Allan Nevins)	Notebooks of Henry James (Edited by Matthiessen and Murdock)	The Rime of the Ancient Mariner (Illustrated by Alexander Calder; Essay by Robert Penn Warren)
JOHN T. WINTERICH	The American Imagination at Work (Ben C. Clough)	I Remember Distinctly (Frederick Lewis Allen and Agnes Rogers)	F.D.R.: His Personal Letters (Edited by Elliott Roosevelt)	Command Decision (William Wister Haines)	The Chequer Board (Neville Shute)
JOHN WOODBURN	Let Us Now Praise Famous Men (James Agee)	The Countryman's Companion (Edited by David B. Greenberg)	Black Metropolis (Drake and Cayton)	Under the Volcano (Malcolm Lowry)	Mr. Weston's Good Wine (T. F. Powys)

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John G. Winant: Casualty of the Peace

"None More Genuinely American"

BY HERBERT PELL

IN JANUARY 1941, during one of democracy's darkest hours, President Roosevelt asked his old friend John Gilbert Winant, Director of the International Labor Office, to visit him at the White House so that Winant might tell him what he had seen of the German march through Western Europe and the situation then prevailing in Great Britain. Some days later Mr. Winant learned from the newspapers that the President had appointed him Ambassador to Great Britain.

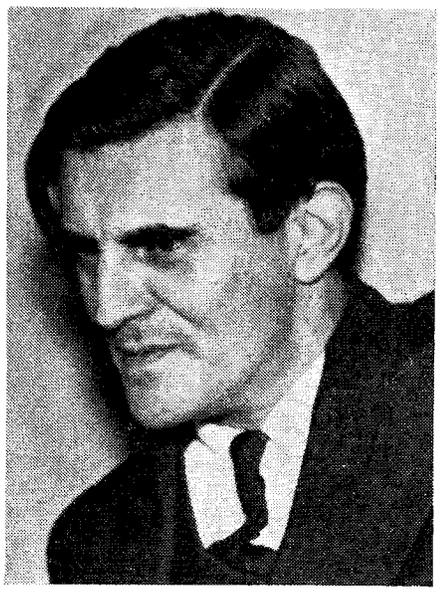
In "Letter from Grosvenor Square,"* written shortly before his tragic death, Mr. Winant gives an account of his work at the Court of St. James from his arrival in February 1941 to the Japanese and German declarations of war on the United States the following December. He wrote it, Mr. Winant explains, because of "the growing disillusionment of today; which not only dims and obscures the present, but is trying to cloud the past."

His book is an important one because it helps illuminate eleven months crucial in the history of Western civilization, eleven months about which most Americans still know pitiably little. "You could not live in London in those early years and not realize how narrow was the margin of survival . . ." Mr. Winant writes. "Four specific moments in 1940 and 1941 are fixed in my mind . . . the Battle of Britain, Lend-Lease, the German attack on Russia, and Pearl Harbor."

Upon his arrival in London, Mr. Winant immediately became both a symbol and a tireless worker in behalf of Anglo-American cooperation in the war against Germany. Frankly and with winning simplicity, he tells how he directed the inauguration of Lend-Lease operations and consummated the exchange of over-age destroyers for bases. He tells something about reverse Lend-Lease —for example, how the British furnished us with scientific information that contributed to the development of the atomic bomb. He pictures England during the Battle of Britain, when there was a possibility that the island might be invaded at any moment. He describes the everyday life of the average Englishman, the sacrifices he made and the spirit with which he made them.

Particularly fine are Mr. Winant's portraits of the British leaders. Winston Churchill he calls "an old-fashioned eighteenth-century Whig" — a description that will strike anyone familiar with English history as most apt. Mr. Winant admired tremendously the common sense the British Prime Minister showed during the complicated negotiations involved in setting up Lend-Lease. It is characteristic of the close cooperation existing between the two men that they were together at Chequers, the Prime Minister's estate, during the first

(*Continued on page* 67)



Winant: "Are you doing as much today for peace as you did during the war? I'm not."

*LETTER FROM GROSVENOR SQUARE. By John Gilbert Winant. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1947. 279 pp. $3.

"The Essence of Gandhiism"

BY LOUIS FISCHER

WHEN you were with John G. Winant you felt you were in the presence of greatness. He was deep and simple. He went out to people without words. He could not express his warmth; it just shone out of his face. He had a big, handsome body and a beautiful head. There was an inner beauty in him. He reminded one of Abraham Lincoln. He often reminded me of Jawaharlal Nehru. Past fifty, he seemed very young, shy, eager, groping, yet wise. During the war, a member of the British government said to me in London, "Ambassador Winant looks naïve. But put a proposition to him and he sees through it and you in a minute and a half."

Aristocrat and Republican from New Hampshire, he was closest to the British working people. Intimate collaborator of Prime Minister Winston Churchill, he enjoyed the company of Fabian Laborites. When Churchill walked among blitzed English folk he delighted and excited them. When Winant went to them they silently loved him. And he loved humanity; not in a general way; he loved humanity individually.

"When all this is over," he said during the war, "I want to go home. I miss America."

"What do you miss in America?" I asked.

"I miss my neighbors," he replied.

Winant hated pomp and circumstance. Once he moved from the White House, where he was staying as President Roosevelt's guest, to a second-class hotel in Washington. A friend asked him why he had moved. "Oh," he said, "I didn't know what to do with my laundry. Here I just make a bundle and give it to the chambermaid."

Winant said he liked to get into new work and meet new people. He liked idealists, especially religious idealists. Next to Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, whom he adored, he was the most Gandhian figure in American official life. He was fair, honest, loyal to principle, and devoted to those who needed help. He was generous about others but merciless in judging his own inadequacies. Our world tortured him.

Who can say why a man of his gigantic moral stature would kill himself with a revolver shot? He was tired. He was ill. He may have had troubles that no outsider can divine. Somebody has said he was a casualty of the Second World War. I cannot help thinking he was more a casualty of the peace we have failed to make.

Just fourteen days before Winant committed suicide he addressed the *Herald Tribune* forum in New York. It turns out to have been a kind of valedictory. It shows what bothered him. "And I'd like to put a question to you," he said with moving simplicity. "Are you doing as much today for peace as you did for this country and civilization in the days of war? I'm not."

Winant was a veteran of the First World War. At the forum he said:

> I have often thought that if after the last war two thousand of us out

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of the two million who fought in France had volunteered to help the children of Germany we might have avoided this war, because peace needs a personal care as well as collective action.

Here is the essence of Gandhiism, which holds that you are individually responsible for the errors and evils of your government and your society, and that you can individually remedy them by your personal conduct.

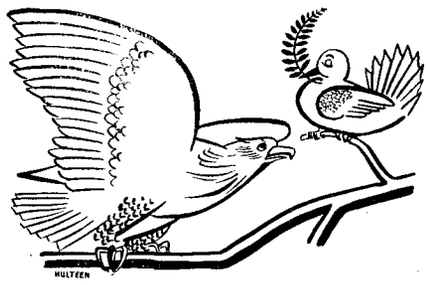
Sometimes when Winant was sitting and talking, or even when he was making a speech, he would suddenly stop. For many seconds, which seemed like minutes, he would be still. He had gone away, disappeared into himself. His eyes always gave the impression of being turned backward and looking into his head. He must have had trouble living with himself. He was his own sternest taskmaster, self-critical, ready to accept blame.

I saw Winant in the United States Embassy in London in the summer of 1941, just after Roosevelt and Churchill published the Atlantic Charter. Its idealism thrilled him. Winant looked for a good peace. But by 1946, he commenced to despair. The peril to which Turkey was then exposed worried him and he expected to discuss it with President Truman. He saw the possibility of a clash and walked restlessly up and down his apartment with long strides. He still hoped, however, and wanted to avoid creating any impression that the road to peace was blocked.

World events in the last few months cannot have quieted his apprehensions. Certainly private matters might have depressed him. But they could be fatal only because anybody who is sensitive to what is happening on this earth depends so much nowadays on the comfort of the friendship, love, and understanding of the people around him. For the morning paper is salt on an open wound.

Some therefore escape into personal life or take to drink. Some eschew politics and serious public problems. One pulls the trigger.

Winant is thus a victim of all of us who have abandoned peace-making to statesmen and diplomats. Governments can only negotiate truces between wars. Peace is built by peoples. The British and American Quakers won the 1947 Nobel Peace Prize though they had nothing to do with peace conferences or peace treaties. Perhaps they won it because they had nothing to do with peace conferences and treaties. Their contribution to the prevention of World War Three is the feeding, clothing, and healing of miserable human beings. The Quakers are friends in need, and they do not investigate the color, creed, politics, or nationality of the needy.



If the advocates of world government undertook to keep alive the bodies and spirits of ten thousand progressive political, religious, and trade-union leaders and writers and artists in Europe and Asia they would be much further ahead on their road, which is the shortest road to peace.

If the women who (though their Government was fighting the war) rolled bandages, drove ambulances, ran blood banks, and collected funds to cure the wounds of battle would now give as much time, energy, and money to cure the gangrenous wounds of peace (though their government allocates billions for the same purpose), there would be less chance of another war.

IF THE airmen of America rebuilt Hiroshima it would do more for world peace than all the peace treaties that have been or may be signed.

If the veterans of two wars, instead of marching, meeting, and passing resolutions, sent two thousand men to each of twenty foreign countries to do what the Quakers are doing, the way the Quakers are doing, they might deserve the Nobel Peace Prize of 1948.

The arrogance and violence of individuals and of racial, religious, and economic groups add up to national arrogance and war. The waters of hate are so high that the dove cannot come back with an olive branch to gladden, and reassure, a Winant. If everyone were fighting intolerance of those who are different we would be civilized, and if we were civilized we would not want to kill enemies or allow Winants to kill themselves.

Americans gave their sons, their blood, their money, their time, their nerves to win the war. But individually we are giving little to win the peace. Yet it is harder to win a peace than to win a war. The Western powers fought one war to make the world safe for democracy, then they did nothing after the war to make the world safe for democracy and so they had to fight another war to make the world safe for democracy. Winant knew that if we did not save democracy in peace we would have to save it in war a third time.

Winant often used the word "care." Do you care about peace? Then you have to take personal care of it. He was oppressed by the fact that we did not realize the urgency of the matter. We were leaving it to the government to help and leaving it to the government to sound the Voice of America. But a Friendship Train loaded with food and clothing for Europe, speaks louder than the radio.

Winant should have stayed and worked with us. He succumbed in a moment of weakness. It is our loss and, at least in some measure, our fault. "Are you doing as much for peace as you did for this country and civilization in the days of war?" May that death cry of Winant's do his work after him.

Louis Fischer's latest book is "Gandhi and Stalin" (Harper). Mr. Fischer is at present in the United States writing a biography of Lenin.

In the Beginning

(After reading "Between Heaven and Earth")

By Evelyn Ames

THERE were no other tongues to borrow from,
No stored-up language, waiting to be used,
But only that impulsive speech whose words
Sprang fresh and living from the lips of men
As blades of green spring sunward from the ground.
Creation itself was no more marvelous
Than this spontaneous hymn which it evoked,—
When stars flamed out from anonymity
And took their place as gods in the night sky,
When hill and water, bird, and leaf, and cloud
Received a gift beyond the gift of being:
Each man was then a poet, himself the lyre
Whose songs unlocked the reticence of stones
And charmed the trees away from their dark roots;
Like children, who endow familiar things
With unfamiliar glory in their games,—
Men loved, and gave beloved things their names.

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Ideas. *In the "Meaning of Treason" Rebecca West dissects the bewildered individual in our time—specifically, the traitor, whose bewilderment leads to an act of perverse negation. Sartre, equally concerned with the plight of the individual in the modern world, has in "The Age of Reason" and "The Reprieve" attempted to convey through fiction the existentialist's view of the world. To speak is to act (he writes in his article, p. 25); the word is action; and the written word is an instrument of change. What then is this existentialism about which so much nonsense has been written? It is a salute to a world where values are bedded in sand, where choice is blunted by complexity, and the way is dark. It is a challenge to man to act and to live, though he knows that he cannot know. And by living to give some shape to a shapeless world.*

Most Mortal of Sins

THE MEANING OF TREASON. By Rebecca West. New York: The Viking Press. 1947. 307 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by STRUTHERS BURT

AS YOU read "The Meaning of Treason" it is exactly as if, sitting high in an amphitheatre, you were looking down upon the wielding, under a bright light, of a scalpel in the hand of an expert surgeon. On the table lies the pallid and sick body of treason. But the surgeon is a woman, and in sicknes or sorrow or disgrace, to a woman, unless she is bi-sexual, the small seed is naked and alone and sorrowful beyond measure. Man is indeed master of his soul, and responsible, but there are so many who are masters of nothing, ghosts moving in a vacuum. And there are so many who come to the operating table, unaware of just how they came.

Miss West's protagonist, naturally, is that small, strange, truculent, fierce, and yet not unbeguiling figure, "Lord Haw-Haw," William Joyce; born an American, by descent an Irishman, and by death an Englishman—Wandsworth Prison, London, England, January 3, 1946, on the scaffold, a white cap hiding his scarred face. Only a short time ago, anywhere in the world, one had only to turn a dial at the appropriate hour and into anything one might be doing, fell, like the sound of a descending guillotine, that dreadful, that sneering voice, welcoming death for all those who spoke his tongue. And yet the man himself was tiny, and uncertain, and often bewildered. And had numerous virtues. He loved learning; and his family loved him, and so did his second wife.

Radio is a terrible thing. A genie of intrusion. A far more potent weapon for enlightment, or ignorance, than the serpent, or the apple, of the Garden of Eden. Who could escape the equally dreadful voice of Adolph Hitler? Innocence is no longer possible. But by the same token, knowledge should be everywhere. What sort of person is it who, having once heard the voice of William Joyce or Hitler, would not be warned for evermore of the evil that lies in man's desire to rule other men?

And it is just that question that Miss West answers. For the answer does not lie in the realms of reason or objective knowledge, but in the subjective tortuousness of human behavior. The answer lies in the realms of psychology, as does the ultimate answer to everything. The clash of battle begins first in the minute caverns of the human mind. Think what a gain it would be to prospective and possible cures, and the writing of history, if instead of explanations based on the surface and upon results, not causes, historians and statesmen would start at the beginning with man and his curious ways.

All life is an illness, but it need not be if man will begin the wisdom of medicine and the hunger of the healer.

Miss West chooses William Joyce as her protagonist, just as English justice chose him, because he is the epitome of the simon-pure traitor; the perfect symbol of his particular sin. Upon his shoulders rested squarely the cloak of Judas Iscariot. Had he been a lesser man he would have been merely the perpetual grumbler and local marplot; had he been a greater man, he would have been a patriot. For the actaual traitor is never a man of mean attainments and the difference between a great traitor and a great patriot is a narrow one. Treason, like patriotism, is vigor and imagination out of the ordinary, but, unlike loyalty, it is vigor and imagination undisciplined and unable ever to

THE AUTHOR: An early exposure to London's footlights inspired Ireland-born Cicily Isabel Fairfield to adopt the pseudonym Rebecca West—after Ibsen's heroine in "Rosmersholm." In 1911, an ardent, nineteen-year-old suffragette and defiant Bohemian, she joined the staff of *Freewoman.* Next year she started for the *Clarion* the political writings that have distinguished her career as an English novelist, essayist, and critic. Her views on politics and letters appeared frequently in the *Star, Daily News, New Statesman, American Bookman,* and *New Republic.* Since 1931 she has reviewed books for London's *Daily Telegraph.* Her first book in 1916 evaluated Henry James. By 1938 she'd published six novels ("The Return of the Soldier," "The Judge," "Harriet Hume," "War Nurse," "The Harsh Voice," "The Thinking Reed") and four non-fiction works ("D. H. Lawrence: An Elegy," "Ending in Earnest," "St. Augustine," and "The Strange Necessity"). Notwithstanding some prior tart observations on marriage, in 1930 she became the happy wife of Henry Maxwell Andrews, a retired banker. A trip they made through Yugoslavia was incentive for her masterful "Black Lamb and Grey Falcon," and gave her authority to superintend BBC war broadcasts to that country. During the conflict her own voice was frequently on the air. She has also written the text for two of David Low's cartoon books and edited an English edition of Carl Sandburg's poems. *The New Yorker* assigned her to report the Nuremberg and British treason trials and, last June, the Greenville, S. C., lynching trial while here for the English Refugees Defense Committee. She lives on an eighteenth-century dairy farm "with tulips and tomatoes all over the place," near London, where her son is in radio. She has brilliant, dark eyes and a soft, vibrant voice, but frets about her weight, writes several hours daily, milks cows, and is handy with a pitchfork.—R. G.

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forget self in greater love. Nor is the actual traitor ever venal. Judas Iscariot did not sell his Master for thirty pieces of silver. The thirty pieces of silver were an afterthought. He sold him because he could not sink his own personailty in the greatness of another or a cause, and because he himself wished to be The Man. All crosses blossom with the sad fruit of man's inferiority-complex. Treachery is a failure of love and that is why it is the coldest of all sins. Nor does the traitor know that through loyalty and love and forgetfulness of self comes leadership when the time is ready.

Miss West to broaden her canvas and prove her thesis treats of the other Contemporary English traitors, but with the exception of John Amery she dismisses them with vignettes, acid but pitying. William Joyce, however, she pursues into all his retreats and throughout all his life with the devoutness of a Hound of Heaven. And the chase is as eerie, and as haunted, and as rewarding as that other chase. And, on a lower level, it is as exciting as a detective story. In the end he is there; small, odd, at war with his kind, pinned against a wall, perfectly outlined, breathless; and, in the large sense, heart breaking.

For Miss West's research brings us to the conclusion that force, human or otherwise, is, to begin with, force, neither good nor bad, but to be made good by our own efforts and will. And that it is here, inescapable and the power behind everything. And that especially until we learn to regard the particular force which is humanity as God in man, with the knowledge that God will not act until we bid him to, and that if we bid him wrong we have not God but his terrible antithesis, there will be neither peace nor satisfaction nor human brotherhood. Were we to expend upon human force, recognizing it as such, one-half the ingenuity and effort we expend upon the channeling of water, mankind might blossom beyond all expectations.

But "Lord Haw-Haw," outstanding traitor that he is, is merely a detail in "The Meaning of Treason's" larger scheme, and a proof. Treason, like all plagues, is world-wide and endemic, and, as with all plagues, there are certain times when the moon and the air and the earth are heavy and duly ripe for it, and it becomes an epidemic. Mankind should know by now that it cannot break down all loyalties without, and speedily, replacing them by better ones. Hell loves a vacuum. And this, our decade, has become an especial hunting-ground for treason.

(*Continued on page* 80)

Private Dramas

THE REPRIEVE. By Jean-Paul Sartre. Translated by Eric Sutton. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1947. 445 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by RICHARD MCLAUGHLIN

CONTRARY to the rumors whispered in the corridors of publishing houses and the shrill, even less-informed onslaught against Existentialism by the press, Existential literature is going to be with us for some time to come. At the very moment that Existentialism was receiving the most undignified publicity by a number of this country's drama critics, book reviewers, and columnists, who busily denounced it as "a post-war craze instigated by high priests Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir," public demand for Sartre's novel "The Age of Reason" exhausted three printings. It also reached the best-seller list, which is certainly more than the most devoted of Sartre's admirers would have dared to predict.

All we have to go by is the fact that some of Existentialism's most violent enemies abroad at least concede that its literature "excites the imagination with the morbid curiosity of a thriller." Here, then, may be the explanation for Sartre's growing popularity as a novelist if not a dramatist. He appeals to his readers on several levels. To those who do not wish to embrace his philosophy wholeheartedly or in part, there are always the more sensational aspects of his novels to intrigue them. And when his sordid, often scatological, impressions of life begin to wear on us, there are the analytic, poetic, and psychological elements of his work left to challenge and stimulate the intellect.

If "The Age of Reason" was at all difficult to classify, then "The Reprieve" will defy categorizing altogether. It is very different from the first volume since it does not confine itself to describing any particular milieu; Mathieu, Marcelle, Daniel, Ivich, Boris, and Lola and the others appear, but they are only secondary characters in a vast *mis en scène*, into which a whole new crowd of people are drawn from every walk of life.

This, more than anything, is a novel of protest and revolt, the tragic, ironic drama of lives swept along in a tide of hysteria and fear; its real protagonist being Europe mobilizing for war, its general theme that of the anguish of atheistic man who exists in an absurd universe surrounded by a total subjectivity of values since there is no supreme Being to guarantee them. Here we meet in the deliberate contrivance of scenes and moods, the calculated arrangement of tenses, the careful juxtaposition of lives running parallel toward the common destiny of war, Sartre, the writer of philosophical theses. But only a novelist of his persuasive and original talent could make us like them; for we find ourselves disagreeing almost instantly with the French critic who called this work "the thesis novel in all its horror."

What is so horrific about it? Surely not the technique. This attempt to present an over-all picture of Europe during those tense but shameful days of anxiety which ended with the Munich treaty in the last week of September 1938, would not have been half as successful if Sartre had not employed the "camera-eye" technique. And certainly this kaleidoscopic effect which we owe to the motion picture, to the newsreels particularly, is a familiar trick of Dos Passos and Faulkner, both of whom also employ symbolism, incidentally, like Sartre, to carry out the naturalistic design of their novels.

Nor is it the first time in our day that a French novelist has tried to depict on a broad canvas French society on the eve of war. Jules Romains, philosopher-novelist, dwelled with painstaking, sometimes tedious, detail, in his cycle "Men of Good Will," on the restless scene leading up to 1914. By comparison Sartre's present work seems all the more brilliant an achievement since so much is compressed into one volume and so many levels of consciousness are touched by his alert, penetrating, inquiring mind. Not only do we see his characters' idiotic behavior on the brink of war, but we are enabled to read their

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thoughts, and not only their conscious thoughts but their unformulated thoughts are spoken aloud as well. Thus we get the multiple effect of an incident having occurred, the participant's mental reaction to it, and under this a startling voice expressing thoughts aloud which most of us fear to put into words. This simultaneous treatment permits us to see more than the ordinary camera; in fact, it gives the reader a rare opportunity to look down on, into, and out from the consciousness of the personality, and fully to understand the profound implications of exclaiming: "I exist."

The complaint that Mr. Sartre always chooses petty, inconsistent, cowardly, even ill-willed people to illustrate his theses has less foundation in the present volume. Not confining himself to a handful of intellectuals of Montparnasse, and writing about humanity on a much broader scale than he has ever attempted before in a novel, Sartre has assembled together a most representative assortment of humanity. We find it very easy to accept them—these men and women who reflect many consciousnesses and milieux, whose reactions to the threat of pending war in every corner of Europe are exposed momentarily, hourly, daily. There is nothing to guarantee that their paths will cross; some of them will, but all nevertheless share the same awful destiny, war. True, some are closer in space to catastrophe than others. Milan and Anna have already lost their future in Czechoslovakia while Mathieu still waits on the threshold of a dreadful future. Charles, doomed to a horizontal position on a hospital litter at Berck, derives some fiendish amusement from the prospect of "the stand-ups" going to war, and their having to lie down in trenches to fight. Gros-Louis is a Pyrenean shepherd who cannot read, but knows he will not like war; having been robbed and severely beaten by drinking companions along the wharfs of Marseille he has reason soon to repent ever having left his quiet pastures.

There are countless other persons who have or have not appeared in the earlier volume, all of whom contribute with their private dramas to the panorama of a Europe writhing under anguish, treachery, and shame during those eight historic days of September 1938. Why, then, we pose the question, should we find the incessant shifting of one person to another, one plot to the other, in the middle of a paragraph or sentence, at all taxing? The truth of the matter is we seldom, if ever, do—thanks to the remarkable suppleness of Mr. Sartre's writing. As for the "he" and "she" which unexpectedly crops up in a passage, it matters little to whom these anonymous pronouns refer. Mathieu at Juan-les Pins or Daniel rusticating in the country? Maud returning on a steamer to France or Ivich bored at living with her family at Laon? All these protagonists, the ones we met earlier and the latecomers, are symbolic, and interchangeable, representing man camouflaging his despair at the irrationality of our age with malice, or nonsense, and, on occasion, an unhealthy desire for self-destruction.

We can only conclude from this work that Sartre is as much the symbolist poet and psychologist as he is the novelist and philosopher. We therefore should not be startled by the echoes of derisive laughter ringing throughout the book, for, in this year of 1947, who better than those of us who have already lived through catastrophe can appreciate the sheer lunacy of that period of postponement? A true master of irony, Sartre closes his bitter chronicle with those historic words Daladier murmured on observing the joyous crowds awaiting his return from Munich—"The God-damned fools!"

The Word As Mirror

JEAN-PAUL SARTRE

WORDS are not objects in themselves, but rather designations for objects. Whether these words are pleasing or displeasing in themselves is utterly unimportant, but they do have to indicate accurately an object or a certain notion. Thus, for instance, we often find ourselves in the possession of a certain idea which we have acquired through words without, however, being able to remember a single one of the words which have transmitted this idea to us. Prose is first of all an attitude of mind: we have prose, as Valery said, when the word reflects what we see in the same way as a mirror reflects the sun. This applies also to any accumulation of words, even the most absurd. Do you really believe that language would be destroyed if you should choose to write, like Bataille, about a "butter horse"? I personally do not consider this a clash of words and I do not think that they would harm each other; I conceive of it rather as creating a certain fairy-like being, undoubtedly imaginary but very much alive, and galloping in an animated design. Why, the Baron Muenchhausen, for instance, might have had a mount of this kind, hard at dawn and melting at sunrise. And, by the way, I have no more right to declare as absurd a scientific hypothesis which is not contradictory and which experience has neither verified nor disproved as yet, as I have to name a verbal combination of which I could say *a priori* that it has no meaning. And since we have taken the example of "butter horse," let us look for instance at the famous slogan "butter or guns." Who would have believed fifty years ago that these two contrasting words could be combined into one sentence? And I could quite easily imagine someone who, if today, he were confronted with the choice of "butter or guns," would answer: "If you must absolutely have guns, let it be butter guns!" Thus the expression "butter guns," which is at first sight as "deadly" as "butter horse" may become a commonplace and quite prosaic image, that might be spouted forth any time during a political discussion. At least, someone will say, there was a time when it did not have any meaning. But even this is not correct: about half a century earlier this phrase would have been full of these possible interpretations.

Jean-Paul Sartre "is as much the symbolist poet and psychologist as he is the novelist and philosopher."

Let us advance even further by combining contradictory words, like "square circle" or "bitter-sweet" or

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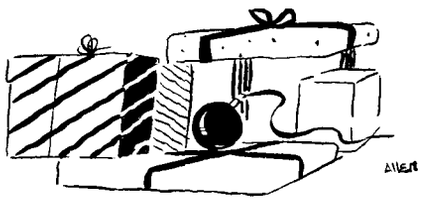
"young old man" or "sad rejoicing" and immediately the meaning becomes clear: the one is an impossible ideal, the other a subtle nuance of our feelings or perceptions. Automatic writing, far from aiming at the destruction of language, is a definite affirmation of the fact that everything one *says* has a meaning, even accidental associations. Once you have entered into the realm of meaning there is no way of getting out of it. Words should be left to organize themselves freely; they will make sentences themselves and each sentence will refer to the language as a whole and to the entire world. To speak is to be in a given situation in the world and to go beyond this situation by means of some particular project. Simply by pointing out this table to my neighbor, for example, I cause it to leave the shadows of the unknown; it exists for him; he can use it. But he also knows that it exists for me; at one and the same time I give it to him and deprive him of its use. As a result of one action I cause human society to exist, because I name part of it to a man in the course of conventions which we admit to each other; because I unveil to him one aspect of the world; because I create the basis for an agreement in principle between us. The grave error of all pure stylists is the belief that a word is a zephyr which blows gently over the surface of things, skimming them without changing them, and that the speaker is a mere *witness* who sums up his inoffensive contemplation in one word.

TO speak is to act: once a thing is given a name, it is no longer the same; it has lost its innocence. If you name the behavior of a person, you reveal it to him: he sees himself. And, as you make it obvious to all the others at the same time, he knows that he is *seen* the moment he *sees* himself; his furtive gesture, of which he was quite unaware while he made it, begins to assume enormous proportions. By existing for everyone, it rises to the level of objectivity; it takes on new dimensions, and is not lost. After all this how can you expect him to act in the same manner: either he will persist in his behavior, because he is obstinate, or he will abandon it. Thus, in speaking, I unveil the situation because I intend to change it; I unveil it to myself and to others in order to change it; I strike at the core; I hold it with my eyes, momentarily I have it in my power, but with every word I say I let go of it a little more, until I go beyond it towards the future.

The prose-maker is a man who has chosen a certain type of action, which could be called action through unveiling; hence it is legitimate to ask him



this basic question: which aspect of the world do you intend to unveil? What changes do you wish to bring about by this unveiling? Those who write for a living know that the word is action: they know that unveiling something means changing it and that one cannot unveil without intending to change. They have given up the impossible and immoral dream of drawing an impartial picture of society and *la condition humaine*. Man is a being toward whom no other being can preserve impartiality, not even God. For, if God existed, he would be, as certain mystics have well imagined him, in his proper place in relation to man. And he is also the being who cannot even see a situation without changing it, for his cold stare destroys or molds or, as does eternity, changes the object in itself. Man and the world are revealed *as they are* only through love, hatred, rage, fear, joy, indignation, admiration, hope, and desperation. The professional writer may be mediocre, he may even be conscious of it, but, since one can hardly write without the intention of succeeding completely, the modesty with which he envisages his work must not prevent him from constructing it *as if* it were to have the greatest impact. He must never say: "Nobody will read my words anyway," but rather, "what will happen if everybody reads what I have written?" One recalls Count Mosca's sentence (from "La Chartreuse de Parme") before the coach which carried off Fabrice and the Duchess Sanseverina: "If the word love comes up between them, I am lost." He knows that he is the man who names that which has not yet been a name, or that which does not dare to name its own name; he knows that he is the the one who causes the word "love" to emerge, and hatred, and with them the love and the hatred between human beings who had not yet defined their feelings. He knows that words are "loaded revolvers," as Brice Parain said. If he speaks he fires. He can keep silent; but since he has chosen to fire, he has to aim properly and not close his eyes like a child who fires only for the joy of hearing the noise.

All this, however, does not mean that there is not a certain way of writing. One does not become a writer simply because one has chosen to say certain things, but also for the way in which they are said. And style undoubtedly is the value of prose. But it should pass unnoticed. As words become transparent and the mind penetrates them, it would be absurd to slide between them frosted glass panes. The beauty in language is gentle and imperceptible. In a painting it strikes immediately; in a book it is concealed; it acts through a hidden force of persuasion, like the charm of a certain voice or a certain face. It does not act forcibly; it sways you without leaving any doubts, captivating you with its invisible charm. The ceremonial of the Mass is not faith; it is prepared by the harmony of words; their beauty, the balance of the sentences, *prevail upon* the passions of the reader, taking him by surprise, compelling him, like music, like a dance. If he tries to analyze them in themselves, he loses the meaning.

One almost blushes at these simple thoughts, but it seems as if today they had actually been forgotten, or else we writers would not be told constantly that we are planning the murder of literature, or, more simply, that payment is prejudicial to the art of writing. If the contamination of a certain type of prose with poetry had not confused the ideas of our critics, how could they think of attacking us on the basis of form, since we never spoke about anything but the essence? You cannot speak about the form apart from the context, and we would not care to comment on it: everyone invents his own form. It is true that the subject matter suggests the style: but it does not force it. And there is no subject matter which can be classed *a priori* as outside the category of literary art. In one word, it is a question of knowing what one wants to write about: butterflies or the Jewish Problem. Once this fact is established, one can start to decide on how to write. At times the choice between the two can be combined into one, but no good writer would ever make the second choice before the first. I know that Giraudoux once remarked: "The only trouble is to find a style; the idea will follow." But he was wrong. He found only his style; the idea never came to him. Art loses nothing by committing itself. On the contrary, as physics always poses new problems to the mathematician, obliging him to find new formulae, so there are always new social and metaphysical exigencies that confront the artist, obliging him to find a new language and new techniques. If today we no longer write in the manner of the seventeenth century, the reason is that the language of Racine or Saint Evermond does not lend itself to the era of locomotives or the proletariat. The purists will probably forbid us to write about locomotives. But art has never taken sides with the purists.

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Abner-mal Dean-monology

WHAT AM I DOING HERE? By Abner Dean. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1947. 160 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by THOMAS SUGRUE

ABNER DEAN is the sort of fellow who gives people the impression he doesn't know what he is stalking about. But he does; he crawls to the edge of self-consciousness, peels back the skin of human thought, and draws pictures of what he sees. The result dramatically explains why you need a hole in your head.

Mr. Dean's people wear no clothes; they are naked thoughts, naked fears, naked hopes, naked desires. A figure is apt to have a pumpkin or a garbage can for a head. Any man's nose may grow until its end lies on the floor, coiled like a whip. Women are states of desire, the dead drink beer in their graves, and men make trees.

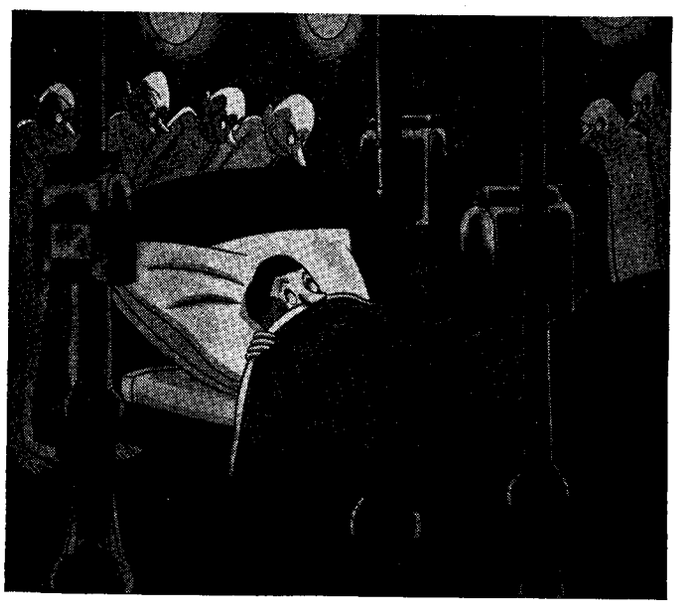
It is useless to say that Mr. Dean is a satirist. This is an evasion. He is a portraitist, and his subject is you.

The present volume contains eighty-six aspects of your psyche. The figures may look like somebody else at first glance; the pages may suggest an Abner-mal Dean-monology; but it's all you, brother, right down to the guy on page 128 who is eating his own heart. The caption says, "This is good food."

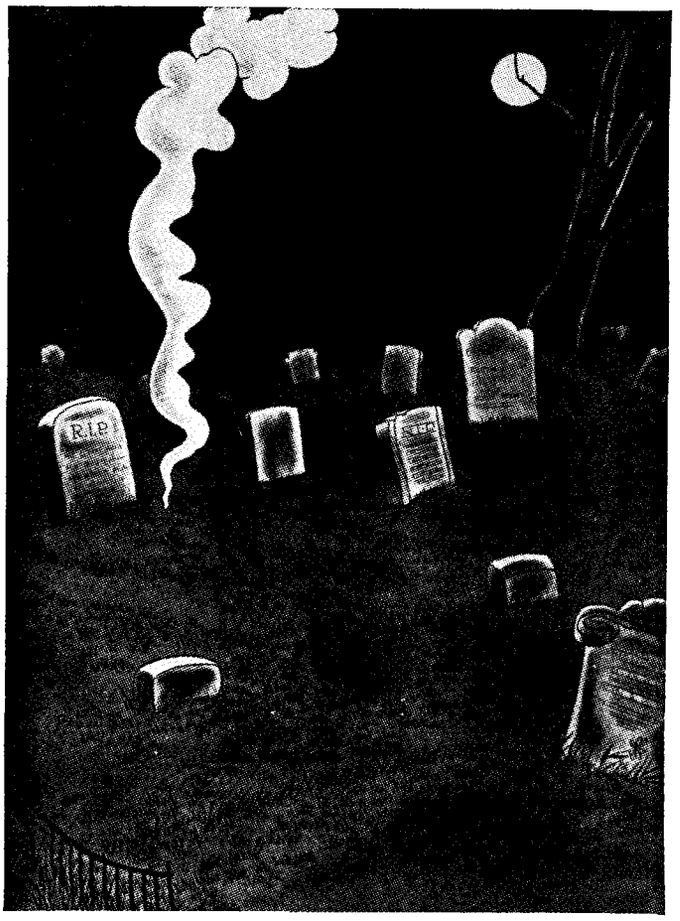
You are, as Mr. Dean observes, a creature of eternal hope, a manufacturer of illusions, a soldier afraid of shadows, a carniverous animal ashamed of its hunger, a consciousness uncertain of its identity, a loneliness trying to commit suicide. You don't know where you're going but you're on your way. Nobody can fool you; you've beaten him to it.

It may be that you will disagree with Mr. Dean. You may regard yourself as a person of purpose, of meaning, of virtue, of nobility. Most of all, you may regard yourself a center of intellect and will, a mind objectively scanning its environment, making judgments based on reflection, acting shrewdly and for gain. It may be that this is so; your bank books, your newspaper clippings, and the signed statements of people in your hire may prove it. In such case you will find Mr. Dean's drawings an interesting commentary on the people around you in the world.

Either way the book is an ideal Christmas gift. Give it to yourself.



"I wrote a stupid letter."



"I smoke too much."

"I must remember to have it fixed."

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The Saturday Review of Literature

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Published by The Saturday Review Associates, Inc., 25 West 45th Street, New York 19, N. Y., Harrison Smith, President; J. R. Cominsky, Executive Vice President and Treasurer; Amy Loveman, Secretary

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The Retreat from Washington

ROBERT M. HUTCHINS, Chancellor of the University of Chicago, has publicly announced that he can no longer in good conscience advise faculty members and graduates to go into government service. Present conditions are such, he said, as to make it virtually impossible for trained people to do credit either to themselves or the public welfare in government jobs.

For a nation which was founded upon the need and the determination to attract its finest abilities for government work; indeed, for a nation whose very existence requires it to command the highest caliber of personnel, this may seem a shocking and dangerous public position for a person of Dr. Hutchins's prominence and position to take. Dr. Hutchins is the head of a university upon which the government leans heavily for carrying on and staffing its most important scientific projects, not least among them being atomic energy research and operations. It would appear as though Dr. Hutchins had done severe injury to the national welfare.

Actually, Dr. Hutchins could be performing no greater public service. He is fully aware of the implications of his statement; but he also believes that the American people have not as yet grasped the bold fact that Federal employees in too many instances have become second-class citizens, humiliated and demeaned by the very government they have attempted to serve.

As an example of the mounting assault against incentive for going into government service, Dr. Hutchins cited the case of William Benton, who resigned recently after several years in key Washington positions, the most recent being that of Assistant Secretary of State.

"There was no question of Bill Benton's administrative ability," Dr. Hutchins said. "He had made a fortune in advertising and public relations and could take over an ailing company and rehabilitate it. But once he became a government official and openly advocated a certain program, which he was eminently fitted to carry out, he was denounced and attacked in Congress. Apparently, the only reason for this was Benton's desire to serve his country.

"It seems to be the custom in Washington nowadays that any public servant who attracts Congressional attention is automatically subjected to abuse. The University of Chicago is not advising its faculty members and graduates to expose themselves to that sort of thing."

* * *

Little wonder that more and more professional and highly qualified people are shying away from Government appointments. The atomic bomb may or may not still be a "secret," but it is no secret that the Government is having a difficult time staffing its atomic energy projects. Relatively few of the front-line physicists and chemists who helped to produce the bomb are still with the project. Doubtless, a large number has dropped out because of highly attractive offers from industry and universities; but even within this group you find the general view that working for the government was hampered in many cases by the supervision of non-scientists who seem to regard themselves primarily as loyalty inspectors.

Federal employees line up to be fingerprinted as part of the loyalty program.

The Saturday Review is in possession of a sworn statement by one of the scientists describing the atmosphere of suspicion and hostility at one of the atomic centers. This statement enumerates a long list of astonishing and frequently idiotic questions which this particular scientist was called upon to answer "in full"—only a few of which could possibly have any bearing upon "security"—and tells of the interminable cross-examinations to which he was subjected.

We must, of course, recognize the critical importance on such projects of screening out all those who may be committed to the policy or the ideology of a foreign power; but Americans have a right to expect that some intelligence and sense of democratic values will be applied to the problem. It will hardly advance the security of this country if—in the name of security—we deprive ourselves of the human resources on which our real security basically rests. The vision of Red hordes sweeping over America is perhaps standard material for nightmares; but having the country overrun by over-zealous loyalty bulldogs competing with each other for victims doesn't do much to promote sound slumber, either.

Our national shortsightedness in driving scientists and such top-flight executives as Mr. Benton out of public service—whether because of the loyalty psychosis or Congressional irresponsibility—is taking its toll in virtually all branches and on all levels of Government work. Indeed, so far has the fear psychology permeated the Government that it has become necessary for President Truman to reassure Federal employees against a witch hunt. This reassurance is as welcome as it is needed; but the President must realize that his loyalty order of last spring was so loosely stated as to make the present situation virtually inevitable, taking the growing tension into account. It is not easy to forget the front-page newspaper photographs showing the stunned, bewildered looks on the faces of the young men and women as they waited on long lines to be fingerprinted under direct orders from the President. Many of them, no doubt, tried to comprehend what crime it was they committed, and why it was that they should suddenly find themselves subjected to such crippling indignities, with flash bulbs of newspaper photographers blazing away in front of them.

* * *

Or consider in detail the case of the seven employees dismissed from the State Department six months ago as "potential security risks." Some of

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them had left responsible positions in universities to go into Government service, where they had served for many years. Suddenly, they were dismissed without being told the nature of the charges against them. After considerable pressure had been brought to bear in their behalf, some of them were permitted to appear before a panel of State Department executives and allowed to make a statement. They were told, however, that the statement would be of no possible use since the case was closed.

The circumstances of the dismissal, of course, made it virtually impossible for these people to obtain employment elsewhere. They were condemned men—whether with respect to their past or future work, or their place in their communities. Their record had been smeared—and there was no possible way for them to clear themselves of the charges, for they had no way of knowing what those charges were. Nor were they allowed to resign without prejudice.

After weeks of futile effort to learn their offense, the discharged employees turned the case over to the Washington law firm of Arnold, Fortas, & Porter, which agreed to represent them without fee because of the obvious and shocking violation of human rights involved. There was also a clear violation of Civil Service regulations, but the State Department had circumvented those provisions under a rider to a Congressional appropriations bill which authorized that agency and other "sensitive" agencies to make whatever changes in its personnel it deemed necessary for "reasons of security."

It seemed to trained Washington observers that the State Department, in an effort to placate a Congress dominated by the opposing party at a time when the Red hunt was getting under way, had offered up these seven employees as sacrificial lambs. This interpretation was not considered farfetched because of the State Department's difficulty in obtaining its full appropriation from Congress, especially in view of the open invitation extended by Congress to the State Department to set up its own dismissal system. As a not-unimportant sidelight, it can be stated that the names of most of the discharged employees were spelled in such a way that those Congressmen who are habituated to judging a man's Americanism by the sound of his name would hardly be displeased.

Arnold, Fortas, & Porter's first act was to send a letter to Secretary of State George C. Marshall, asking that the men either be confronted with the charges against them, with an opportunity to meet those charges honestly,

or to be allowed to resign with a clear record. The letter went unanswered and unacknowledged for four weeks. Then things began to happen. Bert Andrews, chief of the Washington Bureau of the *New York Herald Tribune*, took hold of the story and began to ask questions.

Not until the State Department learned that the conservative *New York Herald Tribune* was going to publish a story revealing the altogether callous disregard of traditional American rights and the cavalier method of handling questions involving due process of law did the law firm receive a reply to its letter. The letter was signed by Acting Secretary Robert A. Lovett, who asserted that the State Department was within its rights in declaring that any of its employees were poor "security risks" and could be summarily dismissed. In justifying the action, Mr. Lovett said that, so far as the State Department was concerned, the matter was a closed book.

This letter, as well as the reply from the law firm, were published in full in the *New York Herald Tribune*. Arnold, Fortas, & Porter answered the principal points in Mr. Lovett's letter and then demanded that the State Department "stop pursuing these men into private life with charges against which you give them no opportunity to defend themselves." Then the *Tribune* jumped into the fight editorially. Other newspapers took up the challenge. It became clear that here was a crisp, open, dramatic case of authoritarianism—an actual example of what happened when a nation allowed itself to be dominated by psychotic fear. It was an example, too, of the mechanics by which government can corrupt itself when it exempts itself from the established processes of law. The State Department gave evidence of being operated as though it had the summary authority of a military high command in wartime.

Against this rising clamor, the State Department attempted to justify its position—less arrogantly than it did in Mr. Lovett's letter, but it attempted that justification nevertheless. General Marshall stated that the proper recourse for the discharged employees was to the Civil Service Commission, which could determine their eligibility for employment in other Government agencies, and also that each employee could go before the new Loyalty Review Board in an effort to permit him "affirmatively to establish his loyalty." But the State Department had good reasons, he intimated, for allowing the charges against the men to stand. Therefore, they could not resign without prejudice.

Yet recourse to other Government agencies was meaningless, of course, since the State Department refused or was unable to tell the employees or the American people why these men were considered "ineligible" in the first place. The seven who were discharged were being asked to prove

Forum

By Leslie Nelson Jennings

STREET-CORNER firebrands argue to a draw
With furious hecklers, while the Comrades cheer;
If a few stragglers clutch at any straw,
There's still more logic in a glass of beer.
Yet on the fringes, not so hard to find,
Always those others listening to the Park's
Green silence, who no longer march behind
The sanguinary banner of Karl Marx.

Utopias can sometimes come too cheap,
Cashed in for less than what a nickel brings—
A cup of coffee and a place to sleep
Loom larger in the general scheme of things,
When Capital and Labor, having shed
The light of reason, both go home to bed.

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their eligibility without any indication as to why they had been considered ineligible. General Marshall, said the law firm, was "now merely passing the buck to two agencies outside the Department. We still stick to our simple request that the individuals be given a hearing in the American way or allowed to resign."

Again, the *Tribune* and other newspapers rode hard on the inconsistencies in the State Department's position. It was pointed out that the employees couldn't possibly obtain redress before the new Loyalty Board, since the Board had no jurisdiction over cases occurring prior to its establishment. It became increasingly clear that the State Department had found itself in an untenable position.

The pressure mounted—both inside and outside the Government. Then, finally, on November 17, five months after the seven employees were dismissed, but only fifteen days after the *New York Herald Tribune* broke the story, the State Department was forced to back down. In a statement that constituted virtually a complete reversal of the positions taken by Mr. Lovett and Secretary Marshall, the State Department acknowledged, in the words of the *New York Herald Tribune*, that:

1. The employees had never been told the nature of the accusations against them;

2. The Civil Service Commission couldn't hear an appeal since the seven did not want other Government jobs;

3. The Loyalty Review Board didn't have jurisdiction because the cases occurred before the board's establishment.

The State Department concluded, the announcement said, that "in order to avoid a possible injustice to them, they should be permitted to resign without prejudice."

* * *

The seven former employees have now freed themselves of official pursuit into their private lives. The record will now show that they have not been dismissed but have left "voluntarily" without any incriminating charges.

But the case is far from closed. The fact remains that the men were dismissed under suspicion of the most onerous crime of which an American citizen can be charged—disloyalty to his country—but without hearings, without evidence, without charges.

Giving the accused a chance to "resign" makes it possible for them to resume their normal lives, but it doesn't meet the questions which the American people have a right to have answered. How is it that a department of the American Government should display itself so ignorant of the form and substance of our institutions? By what authority does it feel entitled to brush aside individual rights as an apparent matter of no consequences? How is that *not until* the *New York Herald Tribune* and other newspapers interested themselves in the case—four months after the firings—did the Department even acknowledge that redress was being sought? Can it be that the State Department, which is charged with the responsibility for representing this Government in its dealings with other nations, does not know that it has not yet been granted extra-democratic authority by the American people? The job of public opinion is to prod and push vigorously and impatiently until it receives full answers. Let the responsibility be fixed, no matter how high justice may have to reach before fulfilling itself.

Does this seem excessive, considering the offense? Yes; if we have departed from our traditional concept of government operating out of law instead of out of expedient or impulsiveness. And even if a single individual were involved, instead of seven, the need for a thorough investigation would be just as great; a principle of justice does not swell or shrink by enumerating the violations.

* * *

Thucydides, that sturdy guide to the diseases of civilizations, has two passages in his book that seem all the more pertinent for having been written twenty-three hundred years ago. He was considering the problem not only of subversion but of justice:

> The leaders in the cities . . . just did not stop at what justice or the good of the state demanded, but made the party caprice of the moment their only standard, invoking with equal readiness the condemnation of an unjust verdict or the authority of the strong arm to glut the animosities of the hour. Thus religion was in honor with neither party; but the use of fair phrases to arrive at guilty ends was in high reputation. Meanwhile the moderate part of the citizens perished between the two, either for not joining in the quarrel, or because envy would not suffer them to escape.
>
> Thus every form of inequity took root in the Hellenic countries by reason of the troubles. The ancient simplicity into which honor so largely entered was laughed down and disappeared; and society became divided into camps in which no man trusted his fellow. To put an end to this, there was neither promise to be depended upon, nor oath that could command respect; but all parties dwelling rather in their calculation upon the hopelessness of a permanent state of things, were more intent upon self-defense than capable of confidence.

Later, describing the breakdown of the democratic machinery in Athens, clearly an advanced symptom of the internal weaknesses that hastened the fall of that civilization, Thucydides wrote:

> The people remained motionless, being so thoroughly cowed that men thought themselves lucky to escape violence, even when they held their tongues. . . . It was impossible for any one to open his grief to a neighbor and to concert measures to defend himself, as he would have had to speak either to one whom he did not know, or whom he knew but did not trust. Indeed all the popular party approached each other with suspicion, each thinking his neighbor concerned in what was going on, the conspirators having in their ranks persons whom no one could ever have believed capable of joining an oligarchy; and these it was who made the many so suspicious, and so helped to procure impunity for the few, by confirming the commons in their mistrust of one another.

N. C.

I Cannot Understand This

By Walter Benton

ON EVERY wall of a room, in every room of a house.
in every house in Bavaria—
a humble, wounded, dying Jew-Christ on the cross.

A cast, carved, painted Jew-Christ on every wall
in Bavaria . . . in every corner,
Jew-angels,
wise bearded Jews partaking of the Last Supper,
The Jewess, Mary . . . with the smiling little Jew-God.

I cannot understand this.

The gas chambers of Maidaneck had walls, too.
And there were hooks for life size images
on the bloody walls of Belsen and of Dachau.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A New Start

SIR: I intend to read "Why I Remain a Negro". [*SRL* Oct. 11] to all my journalism classes. I wish that space would allow me to reprint it in the school paper — I almost tritely added, "so that it could be read where it would do most good," but my pessimism reasserted itself in time. Perhaps we must all be ground to destruction before our differences, trivial or important, are neutralized and we make a new start—if there is, indeed, a second chance.

ROBERT ROTHMAN.

Detroit, Mich.

SIR: Men and women who served in Australia returned with somewhat mixed—but I think improved—versions of color matters, after our troops of both colors were welcomed by the Aussies. There were, as you may know, both disgraceful and *prideful* incidents. I have the honor to be married to a Sydney girl. When we picked up our *Review* and saw Walter White's article she said: "Now that is the only damned thing I could ever get excited about in social work in this country!"

WESLEY STANDISH THURSTON III.

New York, N. Y.

SIR: Walter White's powerful and enlightening article made me hang my head in shame for my "white" race of America. My only regret is that the very people who should read it—the ignorant and unenlightened—do not read the *SRL*.

There is so much I would like to say on the subject, but not possessing a "Negro's" ability to express myself, I shall merely say bravo! May Mr. White's good work make a dent in the thick skulls of my "white" race.

MILDRED W. LYONS.

New York, N. Y.

SIR: May I suggest a fallacy of viewpoint often encountered in discussions of problems of group discrimination? The fallacy is, that when one is criticized for the group to which he belongs, the answer is, "All men are the same." But when praise is rendered, the connotation is, "Men in our group are superior."

For instance, a core of thought in "Why I Remain a Negro," as I read it, was that the Negro is more peace-loving than the white, or, conversely, the white is the more blood-thirsty race.

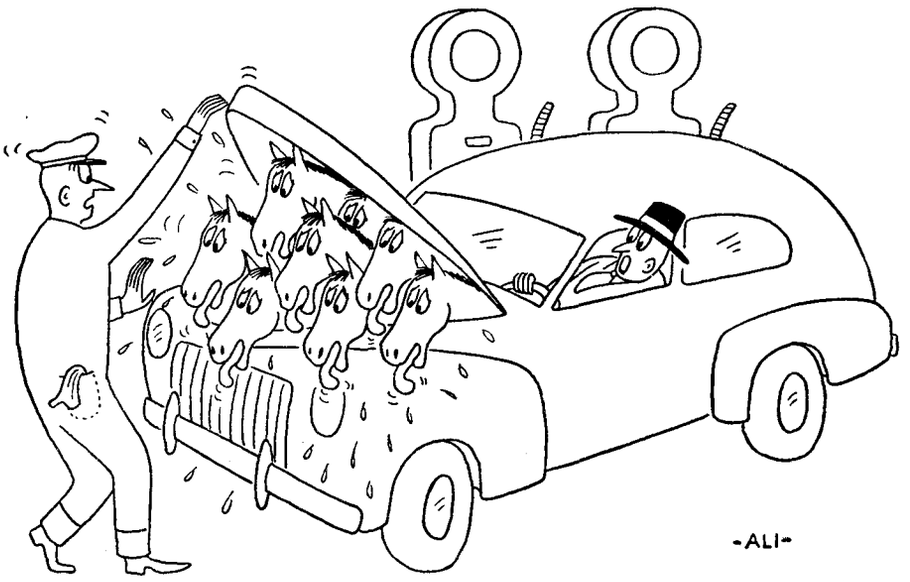
It is ventured that given opportunity, as Christophe was in his island empire, some Negroes, at least, would prove quite as blood-thirsty, as their white brethren. It is said that tribal wars were not unknown in Africa, and slavery itself owed much to the cooperation of unscrupulous Negro overlords of that continent.

On the other hand, trends of difference in attitudes, capacities, and levels of accomplishment do exist as between groups. That truth cannot be ignored, because you have only to walk down the street a block or two to see it.

What is to be regretted is that such divisions are so often emphasized to the detriment of qualities shared in common. For instance, as graphic and powerful as "Kingsblood Royal" was, I believe that it hurt, rather than helped, the cause of racial understanding and cooperation, because of the stress it laid on differences.

WILLIAM S. MAXWELL.

Philadelphia, Pa.



"Just some water, please."

SIR: I often wonder if our "white" race is worthy of "passing" into. The shame that is upon us, as is on no other people, has been and is a strange paradox in history. We, in this country, have found a freedom that works for common good, and why some would deny others this freedom, I do not understand.

JAMES A. YOUNG.

Atlanta, Ga.

SIR: I doubt that a higher percentage of race baiters live in the Southland than in our Northern division. But even if it could be proved that my doubts are unjustified, Northerners who know history ought to be able to recall that traditional folkways and taboos within this Southern area are not the same as those prevailing among our Northern compatriots. However, my aim is to make it known that some Southerners are sure, beyond doubt, that it is not communistic to recognize the divine right of intelligent members of all racial groups, including Negroes, to participate in governance which ordains good laws everyone ought to want to obey.

MRS. VERNON A. WARD, SR.

Robersonville, N. C.

SIR: Walter White's fine article has performed a great service to American thinking on the subject of race by pointing out that a man might choose to be a Negro instead of merely enduring it. To be a Negro American today is to represent the challenge which may save the American ideals of liberty and democracy from death by putrefaction. It is a proud role and I am glad that it has found such eloquent expression.

CHARLES S. JOHNSON.

New York, N. Y.

SIR: May I commend you particularly for the perception displayed in publishing Walter White's reasons for remaining a Negro? As a (white) woman particularly offended by the racial prejudice displayed in even our most educated groups, I am very pleased to see such an attack appear in an organ of the caliber of yours.

MARY JANE DONOVAN.

Grosse Pointe, Mich.

Sharing Shapiro

SIR: In my review of Lionel Shapiro's, "The Sealed Verdict" [*SRL* Oct. 11], I failed to mention through no fault of mine that he is by birth and training a Canadian. Among other things, a graduate of McGill University.

I hasten to apologize and to give full credit to our great and friendly neighbor. This apparent discourtesy was due to the fact that publishers have fallen into the habit of sending out uncorrected proofs of books as review copies. These have no dust-jackets, and so the usual biography of an author is missing. Pleasantly enough, however, or so at least it seems to me, Canada and ourselves can share a first-class novelist, as Lionel Shapiro was with the American Army during the war and is now, if I understand correctly, an American citizen. The more Canada and the United States can share things, including writers, the better it is for both countries and the world in general. Neighborly understanding and courtesy should be two of the biggest exports and imports.

Very much, whether we like it or not, the destiny of the world has fallen upon our shoulders and those of the British Commonwealth.

STRUTHERS BURT.

Jackson Hole, Wyo.

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THE FINE ARTS

LIFE MAGAZINE STOOPS TO CONQUER

IN ITS October 13 issue, *Life* published an article, with editorial preamble, on Pablo Picasso, most famous of living artists. Read consecutively, the two texts achieve a subtle devastation of their subject. Indeed, those who make a business of appealing to existing prejudices, with destructive intent, should study carefully the journalistic methods used. I want to speak of those methods here. But first it may be relevant to note certain factual errors which could easily have been avoided in a discussion of the most amply documented career in modern art.

To begin with, it is rather a shock to learn that Picasso's pictures bring "as much as $200,000 each." During nearly twenty years of close familiarity with the Picasso market, I have never heard of a picture selling for more than $50,000 — an exceptional price. A fair market value for an outstanding current work would be around $20,000, or one-tenth of *Life*'s estimate. On a later page the magazine reproduces in color "The Red Tablecloth," and comments: " 'Surrealist' period for him [Picasso] was brief (1924-25)." This is a peculiar statement, for Picasso's great still-life series of the mid-1920's is notable for a decorative serenity quite infrequent in his later career as a whole, and only after he had completed a number of pictures in this vein did he turn to a style which reflected his growing regard for the psychological preoccupations of the surrealists. There is no reason why *Life's* editors should be experts in Picasso's chronology; there is every reason to wonder what made them suspect surrealism in the placid "Red Tablecloth." On a still later page, the "Girl Before a Mirror" of 1932 is reproduced with the remark, "At this time Picasso has not disintegrated all form." If by "form" *Life*'s editors mean realistic shape, as I think they must, they could have found a far more drastic obliteration of natural appearances in Picasso's cubist works of twenty years earlier.

There are comparable errors of fact at other points in *Life*'s account. Such errors, while troublesome, are not necessarily intended to be damaging. But when the magazine's editors establish the general tone of their articles, they know accurately what they are doing, and proceed with swift assurance.

One of the first lessons learned by specialists in this kind of journalism is never to shoot at sitting ducks. Preserve at all costs the illusion of fair play. Let the victim rise a little way, beguile him with sweet sound, say how good he is in certain respects, point out how strongly he flies. Then let him have it with both barrels. Use an Innuendo Silencer on your gun, so as not to arouse the countryside like the cruder sportsmen of the scandal sheets.

Watch how it is done. The subtitle of the Picasso editorial in *Life* tells us that Picasso is "brilliant" and "this era's most important painter." It quickly adds: "But is he a truly great artist?" Thus we start to read on a note of suspicion that we, as well as he, may be at fault. Very soon we are made aware that Picasso's extraordinary fame, while due in part to his skill and virtuosity, is perhaps primarily the result of shrewd management by his dealers, combined with his own ability to demand and get attention with such odd products as paintings with "pasted strips of oilcloth and paper" *(collages)* and "constructions of wood, wire, and string." No one can deny that certain dealers have made a good deal of money from Picasso's works; no dealer, I think, has ever been able to "manage" him in any important sense. It is true, too, that lately Picasso has been the subject of enormous publicity. But what *Life* deliberately forgets is that up until roughly 1920, Picasso was handled in turn by two of the quietest, most scholarly dealers in Paris, namely, Henry Kahnweiler and Léonce Rosenberg. *Life* also forgets that between 1909 and 1919—the years of the *collages* and the "constructions" which the magazine singles out as successful attention-getters—Picasso did not hold large public exhibitions in Paris. His works were seen semi-privately, without fanfare, and such publicity as attended them was mostly confined to the little magazines.

But now it is time for *Life* to add dashes of praise for the master—"His works hanging in the greatest and most respectable of the world's museums," "As a versatile artist Picasso has few equals in history," "An extraordinary draftsman," etc., etc. But wait. In paragraph two of the editorial we are told that Picasso very probably loves adulation (he's a show-off, you see). In paragraph three we learn that he became a "jack - of - all - trademarks," helping himself to the ideas of others like a "hungry man at a cafeteria." At this point, of course, it is essential for *Life*'s editors to ignore two facts: that since his early dependence on Lautrec, Picasso has transformed his sources into intensely original styles; and that artists all over the world have fed on Picasso's *own* ideas for forty years.

"During the war Picasso behaved with such dignity and courage he became a symbol of resistance for all intellectual France."

ON THE whole *Life* is fairest in describing Picasso's conduct during the recent war, when he stayed in Paris and behaved with such dignity and courage that he became a symbol of resistance for all intellectual France. Yet even this deserved tribute is spoiled in some degree by the description of a post-liberation day on which Picasso "kissed the first American soldiers who burst into his studio, exclaiming, 'You two are so lovely'." Almost certainly what Picasso said was, "*Que vous êtes beaux*"—a very different matter. But with this quotation you can make him sound as effusive as Oscar Wilde, though of course you must also list his mistresses to give an impression of loose living. Point out, too, that as a youth Picasso experimented with ether or hashish, because that makes everything he has done seem properly irresponsible. Never, never admit that in Paris, where Picasso has innumerable enemies as a foreigner and dominating figure, no one of standing has ever claimed that his life was dissipated.

Some of your readers may tend to be highbrows, however, and the way

(*Continued on page* 93)

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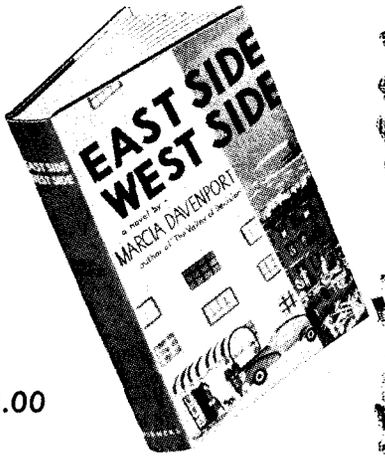

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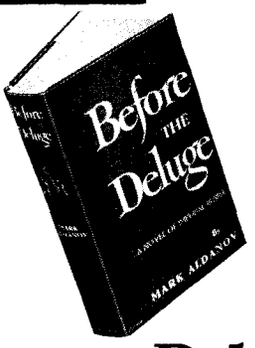

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Fiction. *Among this week's bag of eight books of fiction is the long-awaited end to the life and exploits of Theodore Dreiser's fictional millionaire, Frank Cowperwood. More than thirty years have elapsed between the publication of those massive volumes "The Financier" and "The Titan," and the two lean and short novels included in "The Stoic." The book itself is an answer to why they were not published before. There is a collection of Pearl Buck stories, good, bad, and indifferent. Emily Hahn comes up with a bright novel about a pale prostitute who became a lady in Hong Kong's Stanley Prison. Vincent Sheean's "A Certain Rich Man" reveals depressingly that even a young millionaire finds adjustment to the post-war world difficult. Among the new books to mark with a cross is H. L. Davis's "Harp of a Thousand Strings," a fine example of fictional history and biography without a single trollop in sight.*

The Anatomy of Exhaustion

THE STOIC. By Theodore Dreiser. New York: Doubleday & Co. 1947. 310 pp. $3.

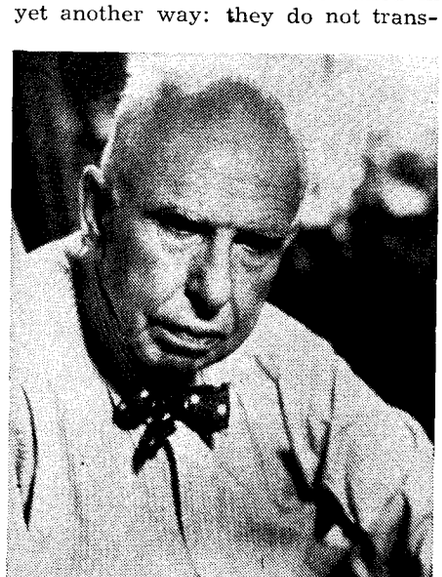
Reviewed by JOHN LYDENBERG

THE FINAL volume of Theodore Dreiser's "trilogy of desire" makes a sadly inappropriate epitaph for the father of American naturalism. "The Stoic" is a tired book. Theodore Dreiser and Frank Cowperwood are tired, and their contagious lassitude infects the reader on the first page. The fictional counterpart of Charles T. Yerkes, Philadelphia and Chicago traction magnate, makes the rounds of finance, fornication, and marital troubles marked out in "The Financier" and "The Titan," but the driving passion has been long since spent and both protagonist and author seem to be performing merely mechanical rituals as they await imminent death.

Although two world wars, a boom, a great depression, fascism, and the breakdown of capitalism in Europe changed the world between the publication of "The Titan" and that of "The Stoic," the weakness of the novel does not lie in the fact that it describes what now seems like ancient history. It would have been a failure had it appeared in 1914, and the two earlier Cowperwood stories would be significant if they appeared today. The trouble arises from Dreiser's own limitations: his inability to resolve his intellectual and emotional quandaries, and the deficiencies of his technique.

If there was any serious question as to the source of Dreiser's strength as a novelist, "The Bulwark" and "The Stoic" have answered it finally. Running to only half the length of his shortest preceding novels, they seem like skeletons, outlines, notes for a novel Dreiser planned to write when he could find time and inspiration. In the earlier novels Dreiser never managed to get quite inside his characters; he contented himself with telling about them, instead of making the reader live with them and participate imaginatively in their struggles. But the weight of the details heaped on details, indeed the very ponderousness of his lumbering presentation, made them real. Now his graceless style and his inability to invent stand out starkly and prove fatal, where they were but minor flaws before. In the first two books, Cowperwood came to life as a great character, the fullest, richest, and most convincing embodiment of the American industrialist of the Gilded Age. Here we recognize his old linements, but we see them only as belonging to a dummy manufactured by Dreiser.

His skeleton novels have failed in yet another way: they do not transmit the positive message that here for the first time Dreiser sought to present. He could successfully identify himself with the ruthless builders of American industry and transmute into fiction the drama of their reckless and undiscriminating drive for power. He could convey, as no one else in American literature could, the feeling of a moral jungle in which the great financiers and the little Carries and Clydes struggled blindly and for rewards that would give them no satisfaction. But he could not portray convincingly the good life which he yearned to see his society adopt.



—*Lotte Jacobi.*

Theodore Dreiser's "graceless style and inability to invent stand out starkly and prove fatal."

"The Bulwark" is the more significant of his two posthumous novels because he there faced the problem squarely and tried to show the strength and serenity that could be attained by unwavering faith and by firm adherence to the ethical precepts of one's religion. But he was still under compulsion to report faithfully the actualities of American life, to stress the conflict between materialistic business norms and ethical or democratic precepts. As a result the bulwark of a deeply-felt Quaker religion is, despite Dreiser's intentions, transformed into a frail, finally broken reed.

In "The Stoic" the moral is merely appended, instead of being woven into the story. Cowperwood dies with his unification of the London underground only partially completed. He has failed to attain that last earthly glory, and his huge fortune is dissipated (as was Yerkes's) by lawsuits, legal fees, and malefactions of his former associates. *Sic transit. . . .* Berenice—the mistress to whom he had, surprisingly, been faithful for all but a few chapters—awakens to the spiritual emptiness of their drive for mundane power, and rushes to India for a four-year course in yoga. Then she returns to the West, to dedicate herself to the management of a charity hospital which Cowperwood had wished to have established. And the book closes with her determination to "acquire, if possible, a real and deep understanding of the meaning of life and its spiritual import." To the reader her conversion seems like an irrelevant afterthought.

It hurts to have to write thus about Dreiser. His contribution to American literature is as great, for all his limitations, as that of any other novelist; he fought stubbornly and often alone a battle that had to be fought. And with but one exception his earlier novels can still be read, not merely as historical landmarks, but as living fiction. "The Stoic," unhappily, is of value only for the unneeded light it casts on the difficulties Dreiser overcame when he wrote his great novels.

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FICTION

Current Croesus

A CERTAN RICH MAN. By Vincent Sheean. New York: Random House. 1947. 378 pp. $3.

Reviewed by
CATHARINE MEREDITH BROWN

AT THE outset be it stated that Mr. Sheean has dispensed with cosmic concerns, has aimed at fiction rather than forecast, and has instinctively leaned towards Hollywood rather than history in his latest book. It is forgivable to expect either a perceptive diagnosis or an oblique comment from any such authority on events as Mr. Sheean. Admittedly, the world is out of joint at this very moment but, for the nonce at least, it is not up to this author to set it right. We must settle for the story, accept it on its own terms, and try not to seek symbolism or the cause of any effect. Such is the case, and as such the novel must be judged.

Despite the post-war timing, the adjustment of the returned veteran, the racial mention, and an occasional sense of fear for things to come, "A Certain Rich Man" definitely does not seem to belong to today. The muddle, the yearning, and the anguishing apprehension tormenting the universe are brushed aside in favor of manifold incident. This technique can be well and good in outright adventure, in fantasy, or in sophisticated satire, but it seems eminently unacceptable in terms of contemporary realism. The characters can only seem bloodless and infinitely remote.

"A Certain Rich Man" deals with just that. Landon Roebuck exemplifies the current Croesus. Returned to his Manhattan mansion at the war's end, he can neither forget the Air Corps nor accept his own living. Almost forty, married fifteen years to his chic and worldly second wife, father of a girl and a boy, he longs to reshuffle his values and to find spiritual freedom. Divorce, an affair with the soap-and-water young social worker Martha, and a more adult liaison with Arabella, exquisite dispenser of the amorous arts, fill the hours left free from his business and his philanthropies.

Martha, a physical Jiminy Cricket, goads Roebuck to investigate and to question his wealth. The attempt to improve his Harlem holdings, the desire to better the world, and belatedly to be a good parent only cause complications and misunderstanding. The soul is left unsatisfied. One joyous interlude contributed, after Martha's marriage, by Arabella, essence of love and beauty, is cut short by her death. The rich man is once more alone, and entirely dependent on good works.

Mr. Sheean writes vivid individual scenes and can capture a quality or state a point memorably and with compassion. "A Certain Rich Man," however, lacks cohesion; the whole fails to measure up to its various parts. The writing seems hurried, with a woeful repetition of phrases; albeit, often excellent, still unedited.

Mr. Sheean thinks right and is what the world calls good, but somehow even these enviable qualities are not enough.

Marriage Grabbag

FAR AND NEAR. By Pearl S. Buck. New York: The John Day Co. 1947. 250 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by HOLLIS ALPERT

IT IS understandable that, of the fourteen short stories in this collection, those dealing with the Oriental character and with the American in China should be the most satisfying. Yet, even in those six or seven stories, Pearl Buck does not show herself at her consistent best. And in the remaining stories, all of which deal with some aspect or other of marriage, one has a distinctly let-down feeling. The stories flow smoothly along, they are generally of sound, workmanlike construction, but their essential mediocrity is plainly evident.

Not all of the stories are of recent composition. They seem to have been gathered together from many periodicals and to have been written over a period of a dozen years. It is all in all a grabbag collection, odds and ends brought together in a fashion that can do nothing in the way of truly representing the author's more solid achievements. A few of the tales are downright clap-trap; it was certainly sheer folly to include so meretricious a piece as "Mrs. Mercer and Her Self," in which not the slightest motivation is given for the main character's actions. It is a silly piece of writing, and it can only be assumed that this was a very early effort which saw the light of day only by sheer accident.

Perhaps the most outstanding of the stories is "The Enemy." This one, a bitter fable about a Japanese doctor who unwillingly saves the life of an American sailor tossed up on his beach, has qualities of irony that give it distinction, in spite of the contrived way it has been put together. Another story with an ironic bite is "Home to Heaven," in which an American family enthusiastically returns to China after the close of the war in the Pacific. Their enthusiasm, their love of the country, are deftly exposed as a love of the material comforts provided them because of their status as Americans.

Two stories of the Chinese people, fables rather, exhibit Miss Buck's more familiar vein. They are done with warmth and sly humor, and the character etching is appropriately simple: the virtuous are very, very virtuous, and the evil ones are black indeed. "The Tax Collector," in particular, is memorable. But in the two stories of Japan under American Army occupation, the contrivances are entirely too apparent. Both present a pretty Japanese girl and a warm-hearted, well-meaning American soldier who romance a bit without harm to the honor or chastity of either of them. The mood, the style, the method, are "B-picture" type through-

—Bachrach.

My Current Reading

SRL's current reading list comes this week from **Joseph W. Alsop,** who with his brother Stewart Alsop writes the syndicated column "Matter of Fact." Joseph Alsop is currently reporting from Europe:

MOHENJO-DARO AND THE INDUS CIVILIZATION, *edited by John Marshall*

DISCOURSES ON LIVY, *by Machiavelli*

THE LAST DAYS OF HITLER, *by H. R. Trevor-Roper (Macmillan)*

WORLD COMMUNISM, *by F. Borkenau (Norton)*

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC HISTORY OF THE HELLENISTIC WORLD (3 vols.), *by M. I. Rostovtzeff (Oxford)*

THE CORN KING AND THE SPRING QUEEN, *by Naomi Mitchison (Harcourt, Brace)*

THE ANNALS OF TACITUS

KOUROI, *by Gisela M. A. Richter*

THE FORMATIVE YEARS, *by Henry Adams. Edited and Abridged by Herbert Agar (Houghton Mifflin)*

THE GREEKS IN BACTRIA AND INDIA, *by W. W. Tarn (Cambridge Press-Macmillan)*

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out, written to order, possibly, for some magazine editor who wanted "realistic" pictures of contemporary Japan.

One other piece should be noted. "Enough for a Lifetime" is a gently sad story of a woman missionary in China who achieves an identification with Elizabeth Barrett Browning while pursuing lonely, irksome duties as a teacher of Chinese young. The background is nicely caught, but in winding up the story, a series of implausibilities weakens the final effect.

The remainder are pretty much told by their titles, once one is aware of the elementary irony they represent. "The Perfect Wife" is, of course, revealed as a most imperfect wife; "The Truce" between a husband and wife is not a truce at all and only sharpens the cleavage between them; "The One Woman" for a man is actually many women, so long as all have a certain gesture and eyes of a delphinium blue color. Perhaps these stories do have digestible qualities for some, but for this reviewer's taste too much sweetening has been added more often than not.

Pallid Jezebel

MISS JILL. By Emily Hahn. New York: Doubleday & Co. 1947. 288 *pp.* $2.50

Reviewed by ANN F. WOLFE

THE AUSTRALIAN career girl whose professional activities form the basis of Emily Hahn's new China Coast story has a secret sorrow. Fragile, blonde, blue-eyed Jill longs for social acceptance in a world which cold-shoulders a lady of many loves only when she makes a cash-on-the-line living out of them. The chance to win that acceptance comes with the Japanese conquest of Hong Kong. Leaving the safety of Japanese protection, Jill seeks internment in Stanley Camp, "the only happy prisoner of war in all of Hong Kong." As an internee she proves herself in the society of Good Women and gains the coveted friendship of *the* Lady Whitford. V-J Day sends her forth into the world, panoplied in respectability, if not in virtue, exultant in her sense of oneness with mankind.

At eighteen, when we first meet her, Jill is one of the girls in Annette's "high-class" establishment in Shanghai. The most genteel of hetaerae, she has a timid approach and an air of innocence that attracts the more precious among Annette's clientele. She developed the lily-maid-of-Astolat technique when, as a junior miss, she became the mistress of a Japanese plutocrat three times her age. The plutocrat brought her to his home in Tokyo where his wife was so unreasonable as to make scenes. Jill accepted installation in a Tokyo *geishaya,* was shipped off to Shanghai by the Japanese police, became the support of her resourceful Hungarian lover. It was through this gallant's business arrangements that Jill achieved the dignity of Annette's.

After many a frowsy adventure, Jill and her *jeune fille* charms turn up at Rosemary's in Hong Kong. Not top-drawer like Annette's, this Rosemary's, but there's a protector to be had out of it and a little apartment. When Hong Kong falls to the Japanese, there the little apartment is, all ready to share with Major Tada. When the British are interned at Stanley, why not join them and become, at long last, a girl like other girls?

In camp the adaptable alumna of Annette's

> was good-natured even about sleeping in a stuffy corner. She spent her days in a sort of smiling mist, an exaltation, feeding her soul on the approval of Lady Whitford and everyone else's rough-and-tumble acceptance of her. Like a child who has been spanked and forgiven, she snuggled into the bosom of Society and clung there.

Her purple past toned down to demure violet, Jill can be magnanimous about Dorothy Maclin, the camp Amber and a redoubtable non-professional. "Poor Dorothy. . . . It's a tough game for amateurs."

Almost inevitably, Miss Hahn's treatment of red-light society calls up Kuprin's "Yama." Despite the rococo touch, the Russian novel stands out as an honest indictment and an authentic human document. "Miss Jill" comes off by comparison as the prank of an *enfante terrible.*

Such being the case, why involve Father Sullivan in Jill's somewhat uncanonical "confession"? What Miss Hahn's pallid Jezebel is aiming at is social standing rather than rescue from "eternal damnation." Why confuse the mock heroics by having her nurse a synthetic little sense of sin along as a child does a hoarded lollipop?

When she deals with the impact of war on the China Coast and the effect of mass internment on the human spirit Miss Hahn is at her story-telling best, better even than in "China to Me." This is superlative stuff, far too good to use as a spoon for stirring "Miss Jill" to the pale pink depths of a strawberry sundae soul.

Old Crimson Ties

CLASS REPORT. By John Purcell. New York: Vanguard Press. 1947. 312 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by MERLE MILLER

READING a book in unbound galleys, as I did this one, has its disadvantages; for one thing, I know nothing about the author. I would imagine John Purcell is a Harvard graduate; the first person singular narrator of "Class Report" is, and I would guess that, like his central character, Purcell spent a good deal of time during the war in the Southwest and South and Central Pacific. He writes about all three theatres with a knowing and intimate irony.

"Class Report" isn't exactly a novel: it has no form and no plot in the accepted sense; it is merely a series of sketches only a little more closely tied together than John Horne Burns's portraits and promenades in "The Gallery." While Purcell's book has none of the stylistic sweep of "The Gallery," none of the minutely penetrating observation, it is still a good book, thoughtful, competently written, always interesting.

The sketches are portraits of Harvard classmates whom Frank Wilson, the "I" observer and a radio network correspondent, rediscovers during his tour of duty in the Pacific and after his return to the mainland—Fernando Chavez, the Franco-admiring Spaniard whose distrust of democracy is strengthened by his humiliating war experiences; Dwight Jones, the eager beaver with the body beautiful who spends his war playing the piccolo in an Army band; Jack Edwards, the ambitious drone who marries a beautiful girl and becomes a civilian adviser to the Army in Australia; Lucas Danville, who as a Navy public relations officer finally becomes one of the boys; Nat Caswell, who changes his religion and his shirt with almost equal frequency and who is a coward when courage is necessary; Guy Waters, who has to escape his successful mother and does—but dies in the attempt.

Mr. Purcell's is one of those books of

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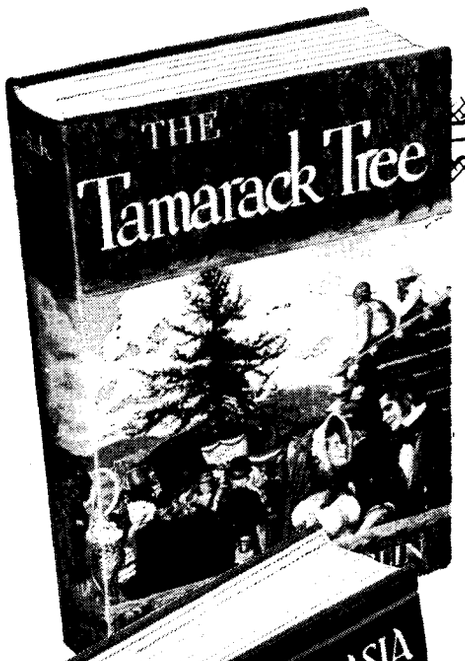

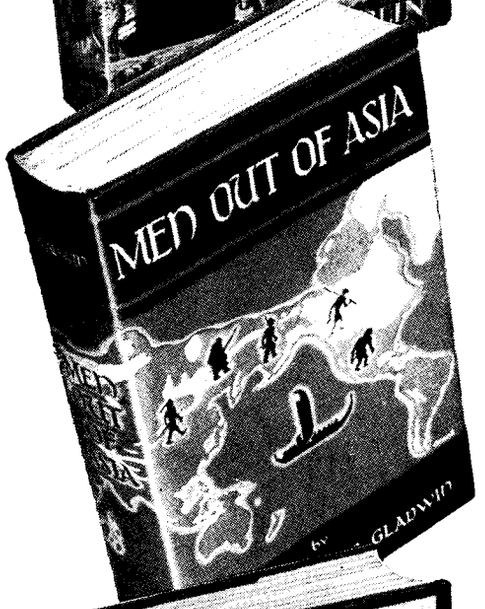

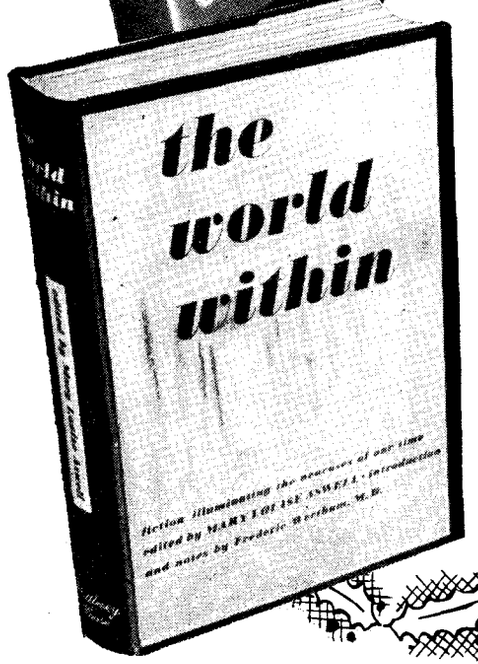

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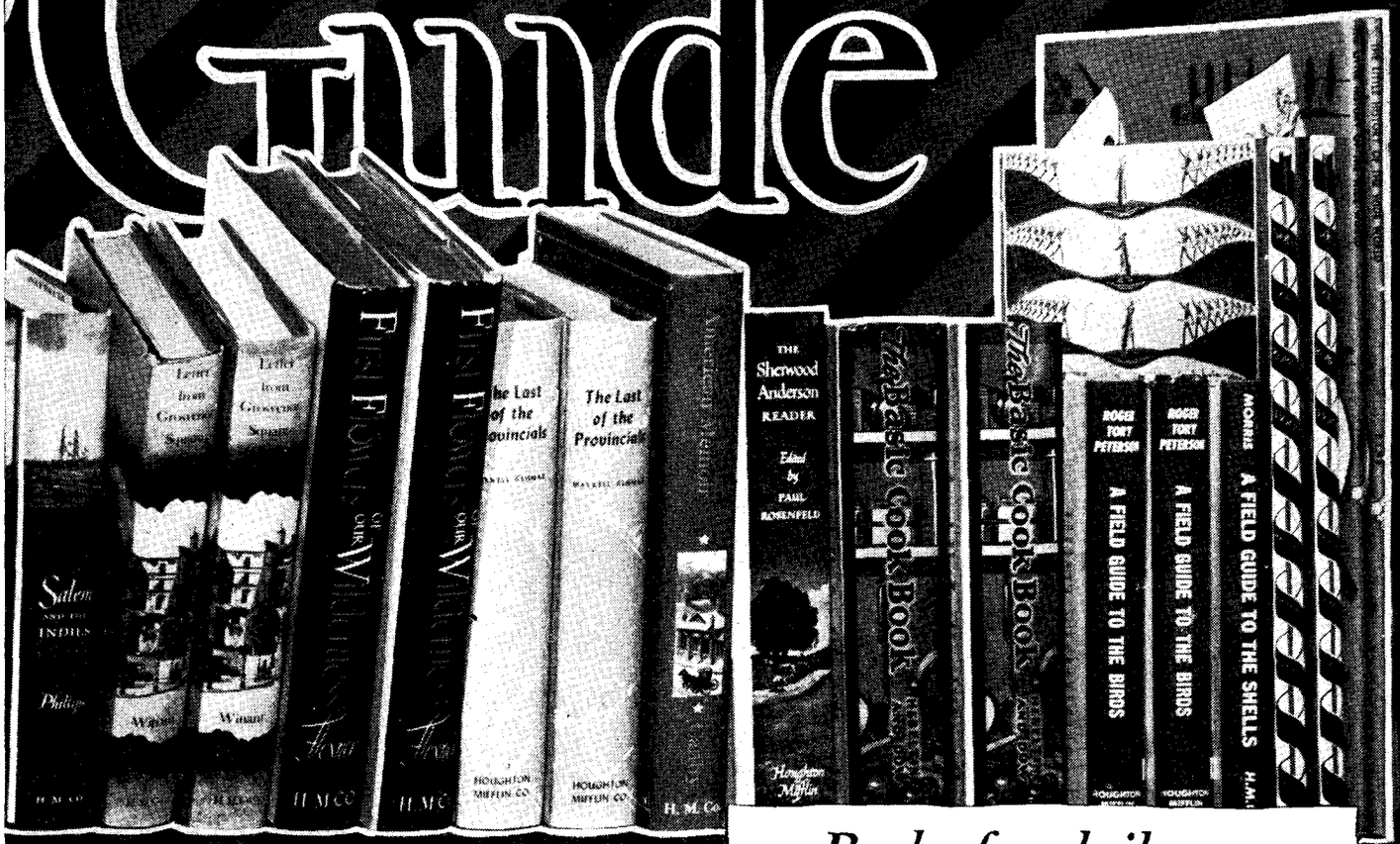

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—Leja Gorska.

John Kafka's statement lacks projection; "his apple trees cloud his sight."

fiction in which imagination and fact seem to be mixed in about equal amounts; both are convincing. What's more, "Class Report" includes an undeniably factual account of the ways and means of General "Dugout Doug" MacArthur, an expose that has been too long in coming. Purcell reveals MacArthur as the ruthless egoist everyone in the wartime Pacific recognized him as being. At a time when the General seems to be planning to walk straight across the Pacific to the White House, what Purcell has to say of "Dugout Doug" is doubly important.

Merle Miller, associate editor of Harper's Magazine, *is the author of "Island 49" and a forthcoming novel, "That Winter," to be published next month by William Sloane Associates.*

Sailor of Fortune

YANKEE PASHA. By Edison Marshall. New York: Farrar, Straus & Co. 1947. 439 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by FLETCHER PRATT

THIS is surely one of the Goddamnest novels ever published anywhere. The story is as intricate and prolonged as a comic-strip serial or a Cecil B. de Mille movie, and it may have been intended to become one or both. It has to do with a young Yankee seafaring man named Jason Starbuck who, just after the beginning of the nineteenth century, gets into the service of the Dey of Algiers, becomes a Mohammedan in name only, rises to high position at the Sultan's court in Constantinople and makes a journey to the peripatetic headquarters of the Grand Cham of Tartary—all for the love of a lady. She is a tall, willowy blonde (a part for Marie MacDonald?) of half-French ancestry, whom our hero has courted in Salem, and who has been sold into Oriental slavery after the ship on which she was voyaging was captured by Barbary corsairs. It is hardly giving away the author's secrets to say that our hero finds her in the country beyond Samarkand, still a virgin, and still devoted to him.

The skeleton of this structure is sufficiently remarkable, but the full character of the book can hardly be realized without taking cognizance of the curtain walls surrounding the framework and the numerous cupolas erected atop the whole. There is a handsome, suave, moneyed villain in it, with a heart as black as the pit; a dwarf with the evil eye and the instincts of a gentleman; a New England sea captain wrongfully accused of piracy and thrillingly rescued at the foot of the gallows; a storm at sea; a fight against Indians on the frontier; a naval duel between a privateer and a slaver; a land duel on horseback with rifles in Asia Minor; a couple of foiled assassinations. The hero's loneliness during his quest for his darling is alleviated by another blonde, a beautiful Circassian concubine whom he acquires en route. He rides like a cavalry captain, is a dead shot with any weapon, knows how to handle a square-rigger; has no difficulty in persuading Oriental despots to do anything he desires. Whatever he needs in the way of money or equipment drops on him from nowhere as though he were a member of the Swiss Family Robinson.

In fact, it is almost impossible to name any element in any adventure story that has been omitted from this one and there are a few *specialités de la maison* besides. But the odd part about this incredible farrago, which would be looked upon askance by a self-respecting pulp, is that it is interesting. There is not much characterization, but what there is, hangs together; it is hard to accept people like these as New England Yankees of 1803 or Tartar nomads, but if this much is admitted, the rest is easy. That all these things happened to a single person or in a single lifetime, no one will admit; but any given incident is plausible within itself. It is appropriate that Mr. Marshall has laid the main part of his story in the East; for he has something of the skill of Scheherezade as well as something of her naïveté in dealing with material not fundamentally dissimilar.

Loamy Legend

THE APPLE ORCHARD. By John Kafka. New York: Coward-McCann, Inc. 1947. 264 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by CATHERINE MEREDITH BROWN

AUSTRIAN born, Bret Harte enthusiast, John Kafka has here paid homage to the emerging American Northwest in a story based on experiences endured by his great-uncle. For narrative purposes this stout fellow is Henry Kafka, and aside from following ubiquitous old Johnny Appleseed to Idaho he finally wins the heroine and the surrounding land. It need not be pointed out that the path to achievement is rough, colored by the ebb and flow of fortune's favor. Rugged winter follows rugged summer, crops wither, gold pours in and out, while vice supplants virtue and lust almost conquers all. The proverbial miss, however, maintains its one-mile standard, and virtue is decisively triumphant.

"The Apple Orchard" is one of those loamy western legends that is told by the campfire as the flaming embers valiantly flicker. It reeks of those good old pioneer days, "our gal gave her all while the boy did her in" sagas. Often this is good; even "Frankie and Johnnie" have their emotional innings, and our tears have been gladly shed for the covered-wagon cohorts. But, if all this is told again, it must be well told.

Mr. Kafka takes us to the settlement of Ophir Dell in the Idaho district in 1860. Founded by a Boston refugee preacher, based on the simple Christian theme of share and no wealth, this village seems serene. But a neighboring worldly merchant accuses the benign elder of hoarding gold in the land, and trouble results. Nuggets impinge on morality, here as everywhere. The elder dies; his town booms. Honky-tonks, gambling hells, and madams are rampant. The greatest of these joyful ladies is Roselle, the preacher's adopted daughter, pledged in the apple orchard to his son Ben, now a struggling medical student in Boston. For Ben, Roselle strips, teases, and wins thousands,

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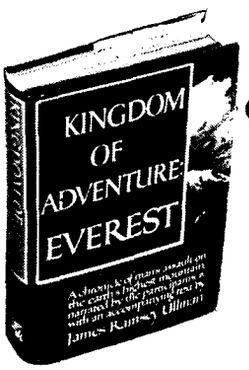

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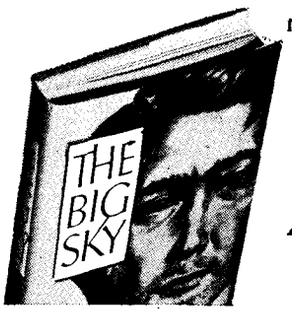

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shipping her gains to "her boy." Finally driven from town by a clean-up gang, she confronts her commercial, Back-Bay-society-infected lover, and sees the fruits of sacrifice. For better or for worse her now dead, gold-exhausted town claims her. Faithful friend Henry Kafka's arms are opened to her, as his heart has always been, and the orchard is his. Together they will make it bloom and flourish.

The Civil War was remote in the Northwest, and in Boston the problem was solved by substitutes. The cross-country stretch during these years was enormous and the thinking uncommunicative. Mr. Kafka senses all this, but his apple trees cloud his sight. Although the yearning, the pain, and the fortitude of the growing nation touch him, his statement lacks projection.

History Sculptured

HARP OF A THOUSAND STRINGS. By H. L. Davis. New York: William Morrow & Co. 1947. 438 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by THOMAS CALDECOT CHUBB

THE muse of history is a vagarious goddess, and when she is wedded to imagination the offspring is often such as would surprise those ancient logographs who set down the facts—or what they believed to be the facts—and did little more.

Sometimes it is a "French Revolution" by Carlyle, in which events that shook the world are presented with the fire of an orator and the descriptions of a major poet, and sometimes a special pleader's "Outline of History." These number their readers by the million and deserve to, for they serve a useful purpose.

Yet even at that they are not without rivals in the field of breathing life into the dry bones of the dead past. From the time of "The Last Days of Pompeii" and "Ben Hur" up to and including the present, there have been a mort of writers who felt that the most lively way of dealing with the days of old is in fiction: well documented if you like, but fiction; peopled with actual persons, but basically invented. They also have their regiments of readers. They serve a useful purpose too.

Latterly we have had a veritable spate of such works. There is no need to go back to "Anthony Adverse," which was, however, a bigger book—and I don't mean in pages only—than its successors. Merely examine the best-seller lists. The books are wide apart in merit and of different durability, but they are all cut to a similar pattern.

But once in a while there appears an author who chooses history as his theme and yet wants to be a sculptor of reality and not either a second Dumas or a cycloramist of seductive boudoirs. The latest in this category is H. L. Davis, once winner of the Pulitzer Prize. I do not contend that his book is better than all named above and certainly not that it is more readable. That depends upon the reader. But for anyone who likes rugged effort and artistic conscience, it is more rewarding. For it represents more than modest intellectual effort, and it penetrates beneath the surface. It has substance as well as shine.

"Harp of a Thousand Strings" is, indeed, a most unusual tale. It is a story of the French Revolution, yet it does not take place in France but rather in a shack town on the American frontier which has been founded by three shabby renegades. And then you discover that it is not a story but a memory. It is a memory of a night spent in a warehouse in North Africa where the same three were prisoners who had escaped from the Barbary pirates and listened to the Americans shelling the town.

In that warehouse, they encounter three persons not unknown to history: she who was Carlyle's "brown-locked, fire-hearted, light-behaved" Théroigne de Méricourt; Tallien, who overthrew the Terror; and Thérèse de Cabarrus, for whom he overthrew it—"Our Lady of Thermidor," who for a while became his wife.

Madame Tallien, now the Countess of Chimay, is disguised, and Tallien does not know—or does he?—that she is one of the audience, and, not knowing this, he tells the story of his romance with her. What it is I will not reveal to you. That you should let Mr. Davis do. Nor will I tell you why it was appropriate that Commodore (self-promoter) Robinette, Melanchton Crawford, and Indian Jort should listen to it. You owe it to yourselves to buy the book.

But I will say that it is a fascinating and well-done piece of work. There is no sword-play and little suspense of action, but the suspense of interplay of character more than makes up for this.

How "accurate" it is, is something different. Personally I do not quite see the Tallien of less imaginative histories in Davis's Tallien, nor is his complicated Thérèse quite the "beautiful, proud, vicious woman" that is described on the jacket and in countless memoirs. They are his own inventions rather. He has just named them Tallien and Thérèse. But they are good inventions, and, if you accept them, the story is convincing. Maybe that is all we need.

Your Literary I.Q.

By Howard Collins

ANAGRAMMED SHORT STORIES

Jane and Alan Otten, of Washington, D. C., come through again with another anagram quiz, this time of scrambled titles of short stories and their authors. You'll find the answers on page 79.

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2. Streek Hill — May Therese Gwinn
3. Fish for Mohade Center — E. Y. Horn
4. Thy Women Speak — Jo W. Scawb
5. Try Me, Boor — I. Ask
6. Steven Helot — Linda R. Grern
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8. Prince of East Shurfi — Helen C. Ward
9. Nibble, Dog — Kathy D. Porrero
10. Ach, They Rip, They Pop — Herb Bexomma
11. Lana Dirf Exonerated — Hebe J. Rastrum
12. Eyes of Limorra — Emilia L. Runkflaw
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14. Gee! This Woman! — Hannah White O'Reltan
15. Courting of Clara Phemk — E. T. Tharber
16. Feed Pete on Squash — Dana X. Kleinshuper
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18. Some Life Amid Life — Angus Mead Sputay
19. Cairo's Last Charm — Selden C. Skraich
20. Use A Clasp — Rachel Twail
21. Mill Stream Strike — Mary Nundoon
22. Death or Long Fighting — Trevor N. St. Boulenoisse
23. O But Hold Me When Waking — Grady Linkpruid
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Belles-Lettres.

Very different in their art as in their lives, both T. S. Eliot and Sherwood Anderson exerted a magic influence on the generation between the wars. The meticulous poetry of the exile Eliot, and the often luminous prose of that honest chronicler of the small town Anderson, represented for that generation landmarks in the current literary renaissance in America. But these writers are no longer new. Imperceptibly they are drifting back to join the ranks of our literary great. Re-evaluations, new editions, collections have set in. And there will be more. Anderson, who receives a sympathetic treatment in Rosenfeld's collection, reviewed below, most recently came under the scrutiny of Maxwell Geismar; and of the writers of the period studied by Geismar in his "The Last of the Provincials," Anderson came off best.

Eliot Re-estimated

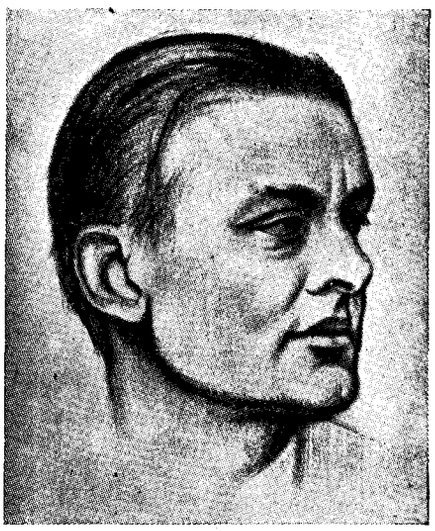
THE ACHIEVEMENT OF T. S. ELIOT. An Essay on the Nature of Poetry. By F. O. Matthiessen. New York: Oxford University Press. 1947. 202 *pp.* $4.

THE FAMILY REUNION. By T. S. Eliot. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1947. 131 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by LLOYD FRANKENBERG

IN A PUBLISHING season more feverish than ever in its search for the best seller—that egg that kills the golden goose—the reissue of two books of enduring quality is more than ordinarily important. F. O. Matthiessen's study of T. S. Eliot is the most detailed so far undertaken. For many years it has been extremely hard to come by. The present edition includes two new sections extensively devoted to Eliot's later work: the plays and the "Four Quartets."

Of the plays, "The Family Reunion" is at once more interesting and less successful than its predecessor, "Murder in the Cathedral." It is more interesting in that, instead of portraying an ecclesiastical personage of whom other-worldly speculation is to be expected, it attempts to present such speculation on the part of worldly characters in a mundane setting. Mr. Matthiessen, certainly one of the most ardent of Eliot's admirers, examines several of its imperfections: the ambiguity of its action; the inadequacy of its minor characters; the lack of any human feeling on the part of Lord Harry Monchensey for the wife he may have murdered or for the mother whose death his departure precipitates; especially the anticlimax of his "expiation"—which will consist, apparently, in traveling. Eliot himself, I think, put his finger on the central flaw, in a speech assigned to Aunt Agatha:



—Sir William Rothenstein.

"T. S. Eliot's conception of sin has the effect of placing an ominous sense of taboo upon all experience."

> What we have written is not a tale of detection,
> Of crime and punishment, but of sin and expiation.

Sin is no action but an attitude, a way of regarding action. In his desire to isolate it, Eliot has left out—or at least rendered inoperative—the crime and the punishment. His reluctance to establish whether Harry did or did not push his wife overboard evaporates the plot. In contrast to "realism"—which might be defined as action without attitude—which he deplores on the stage, Eliot has given us a play of attitude without action.

A great play or an epic, as Eliot the critic well knows, is composed of both. But a poem, lyric or didactic, may be written out of attitude alone. "The Family Reunion" is chiefly of interest, then, in the context of Eliot's poetry. Not that it should be regarded as a poem rather than a play. As Eliot has demonstrated, you cannot separate "the poetry" from "the play." If "The Family Reunion" suffers as a play, it suffers equally as a poem; although there is memorable poetry in it, lines of great beauty and distinction. Its principal value is in the light it throws on Eliot's recurrent, subtly altering themes as they have been developed, twenty years apart, in the two peaks of his performance, "The Waste Land" and "Four Quartets."

Eliot's poetry has always employed narrative elements. These, even in the Sweeney poems, suggest actions rather than convey a story; indicate traits rather than present a person. This intimative quality—apt to confuse the direction of a play, its necessary clear line of action—is the chief virtue of his poems, whose full power of suggestibility is released musically rather than dramatically. Matthiessen analyzes with clarity and perception—and without carrying the analogy too far—the musical structure underlying the "Four Quartets." More might have been done with a comparison of this structure with that of the later quartets of Beethoven, apparently their immediate inspiration. And Eliot's choice of "quartet" must mean that he had four instruments or "voices" in mind. Matthiessen's handling of the recurrent themes, delicate to extricate from such closely interwoven poems, is deftly done.

While he never quite brings himself to saying, in so many words, what Eliot's chief weakness is, Matthiessen's book helps us to realize more fully the real excellence of the poetry and the basis for its reputation, as well as to identify many sources of its multiple allusions. Eliot's conception of sin—his compulsive insistence on regarding it as a mysteriously immaterial entity, or essence—has the effect of placing an ominous sense of taboo upon *all* experience. Under such a cloud, it is of supremely little consequence whether a specific act was a crime or not, or even whether it was committed. Negativism could go no further.

But this sense of taboo does generally prevail in our civilization. In exposing it, even in succumbing to it, Eliot has made luminous the last pitch of human unhappiness. If what he reaches is more a means of consolation than a method of salvation, one cannot fail to respect the intensity, integrity, and devotion of his art. And if he explores the vapors and the fogs, the miasmas and the grimpens, one can no longer say that he is exploring a purely private myth. In his own way, Eliot continues to express the age.

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"Life's Core of Sweetness"

THE SHERWOOD ANDERSON READER. Edited, with an introduction, by Paul Rosenfeld. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1947. 850 pp. $5.

Reviewed by ROBESON BAILEY

THE late Paul Rosenfeld has here brought together, in chronological and classificatory arrangement, a more than adequate anthology of Sherwood Anderson's shorter pieces, together with some episodic excerpts from the novels and autobiographies. Mr. Rosenfeld contributes a learned and affectionate introduction relating Anderson to his predecessors and contemporaries, and explaining his cleavages to and divergences from the canons of literary theory. There can be little dispute with Mr. Rosenfeld's interpretations, except to suggest that he understates Anderson's limitations and soft-pedals his glaring faults.

Sherwood Anderson wrote some memorable short stories, and it was chiefly on the strength of them and his own life story, so often repeated in his fiction, that he became a consequential figure in the literary history of the interbellum period. He expressed a sort of personal, romantic dream which has been persistent at all levels of our literature from Emerson ("Life only avails, not the having lived") to the most sentimental back-to-the-soil fiction in the popular magazines. Everybody knows that one day Anderson, a successful businessman, stopped in the middle of a letter he was dictating, grabbed his hat, and walked out—for keeps; a free man, a lover of all the people in the world. The central and memorable part of his fiction derives from that experience and what he did with it. As one critic said, "It was a kind of wistful realization of the male menopause."

Anderson's special qualities are perhaps summed up in a single phrase from Mr. Rosenfeld's introduction: ". . . his revelation [through his characters] of life's inalienable core of sweetness." The present anthology bears that out very well. To a lesser degree, it also demonstrates other qualities of Anderson's writing which are not sufficiently emphasized in the introduction. These are its tediousness and even, at times, its fatuousness. As one would expect in an anthology made up of shorter pieces, these flaws are far less obtrusive here than in the novels and autobiographies. Mr. Rosenfeld, while not openly confessing the fact of their existence, does suggest that Anderson's repetitions (tiresome to this reader) are part of a calculated effect. That is doubtless true, but it is necessary to insist that too often the effect does not equal the calculation.

For the general reader who has little acquaintance with Anderson—and presumably he is the target for this kind of book—I should like first to recommend two other collections of Anderson's short pieces: "Winesburg, Ohio," and "Death in the Woods." They certainly give a less complete picture of Anderson's achievement than does "The Reader," but he is one of those writers who suffer from too complete a viewing. He was excellent in small confines, and within them he gave us some of the most touching and affirmative writing of our day. But he also gave us much, too much, of the most maundering when he attempted the longer forms.

For the student, or the general reader with a particular interest in the Twenties and Thirties, however, this is a valuable book. Because of its chronological arrangement, it is in a sense another of Anderson's autobiographies, and, I think, the best. It is the record of an American—"the microcosm of the American macrocosm," Paul Rosenfeld calls him—writing what he saw and felt and imagined during one of the richest and most exciting periods of all history. "Groping" is the word that criticism has long applied to Anderson's characters, and it is as true of himself. The effect is not that of a brisk and self-assured reporter interpreting society, politics, and war for lesser intelligences, but of a sharer of life's wonder and sorrow, a man of humility and warmth and kindness. And when you finish the book, you understand that those groping hands have sometimes closed upon beauty, and that he has known what to do with it.

Sherwood Anderson "expressed a sort of personal, romantic dream . . . "

Honey from the Lion

By Leah Bodine Drake

I CAME upon it unaware . . .
First there was sand and silence there,
Blue-burning haze and scorching rock,
Short daggered grass . . . and then the shock
Of great limbs stretched before a lair.

The old brave body, stiff and prone,
Of some king-lion done to death
Upon the threshold of his earth,
All that huge ardor still as stone.

Wild bees had built their honey-comb
In his bright carcase, thunder-maned.
Through brow and jaw the nectar strained;
What Pharaoh in his spicy tomb
Had such rich amber seal his mouth?

I dipped my fingers in the sweet
And oh! the fiery savage meat
Bred from the lands of lack and drouth,
Tanged with wild joy and deep unrest
And desolate courage and the strength
Of loneliness: I knew at length
What fury burned in Samson's breast!

Now garden honey's over-mild
To satisfy the sharpened taste
Of one who's eaten of the Waste.
I know a hunger never filled
Since that strange banquet long ago,
That dark and bitter sweetness grown
Out of the lion's blood and bone,
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Poetry. *Robert Hillyer's observation about Frost's new book of poems—that it contains a generous supply of double meanings which "could be disavowed as symbols if necessary"—represents an excellent appraisal of what seems to be a renewed dominant emphasis in current poetry. We say this not by way of criticism, but by way of calling attention to the healthy and increasing concern of poets with the steady deterioration of society and their attempt to be articulate without going in for outright polemics or "propaganda." Robert McKinney's "Hymn to Wreckage," also reviewed this week, is another dramatic example of the use of the allegorical method to register the impact upon thought and work of material necessity; but the poet searches for values which nourish what Mr. Fadiman once aptly called "the life of the mind."*

Resolution of God's Justice

A MASQUE OF MERCY. By Robert Frost. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1947. 39 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by ROBERT HILLYER

IT IS awkward to appraise a work which will belong to the history of literature. The risk of clowning before posterity, however, must always be taken when the interest equals the hazard. "The Masque of Mercy" is the second in what we hope may be a series.

Robert Frost's "Masque of Reason" was easily comprehensible and a firm unit of structure. Its successor is more difficult, and, after a first reading, one may be pardoned for seeking relaxation with "Sordello." The poet's growing preoccupation with the more individual aspects of his idiom have at times caused obscurity and metrical stoppages. He has thrown in an extra quantity of double meanings and portentous hints which could be disavowed as symbols if necessary. Irony is so prevalent that in certain passages we are not sure whether or not the author is addressing us with tongue in cheek.

However, a second reading suggests revisions to one's response. We conclude that the best enjoyment of the poem depends on a frank admission that the parts are greater than the whole, that the digressions are clearer than the main theme; and, pencil in hand, we mark the larger portion of the text with notes of approval.

The opening question concerns the significance of the *mise en scène*, the names of the four characters, and their relation to the general philosophy, which is a new testament dealing with the resolution of God's justice into God's mercy. The scene is a modern bookshop. This is conceived as a center for fads rather than literature. The proprietor (unless he is speaking ironically) is under the impression that Rockwell Kent wrote "Moby Dick," and though his wife Jesse Bel quotes Robinson, she is otherwise unenlightened. The proprietor's name is My Brother's Keeper, an appellation bestowed, it is explained, by his mother, who was "left over from the Brook Farm venture." Unless the name was a mere caprice on the part of this bluestocking, which seems unlikely in view of Jesse Bel's remark, "She didn't do it to be quaint, but out of politics," it must have something to do with Cain's pert rejoinder to God, or, if not that, some aura of benevolence—which is probably the correct interpretation. Paul, who is cast as a doctor, a psychiatrist, shows resemblance enough to justify a parallel with the apostle.

He is the fellow who theologized
Christ almost out of Christianity.

In his last speech, however, he sounds more like St. Augustine or even John Calvin. Jonah (or Jonas) Dove, the most consistently named, largely fulfills his part comparable to the warlock who vacillatingly cursed Nineveh and resided for three days in a whale. Except for the learned Hebrew pun, the Dove is inexplicable, for the Paraclete, the Comforter, is emphatically not involved. Jonah may be the embodiment of Conscience, or a sense of guilt as conceived by modern psychology. Jesse Bel, like Miss Wilberforce in "South Wind," presents a problem. She is a bibulous Greenwich Villager, married to My Brother's Keeper. According to the spelling, both her names are masculine, one of them belonging to the father of David and ancestor of Christ, the second to the Accadian God before all gods. The sound of the two names, however, suggests a brainless charmer from the Deep South, which is nearer the characterization. The nomenclature is puzzling.

Jonah intrudes late at night into the bookshop, against the wishes of Paul and Jesse Bel, but, at the instance of My Brother's Keeper, is allowed to remain. A fugitive from God, because he was wavering in his profession of administering curses on iniquitous cities (as before), Jonah does everything half-way. He half curses New York, the modern Nineveh, and a slight earthquake ensues, which harms nobody, but dislodges a book from the shelf. It falls open and is treated like the *sortes virgilianae*. After long parlance and hesitation, they consult the passage at which it has fallen open, and it yields a curse on the modern city, ending,

The thought that added cubits to your height
Would better have been taken to your depth.

After that, a whole shelf cascades down, but Jonas Dove remarks that this manifestation is not part of his curse, but God coming after him.

At last they tell Jonah he must go. He starts for the front door but is guided to another that opens into the cellar. At the end of the masque he is about to go through, the door having darkly opened of itself, when it slams in his face and strikes him down. If he does represent the sense of guilt, once admired as Conscience, then the slamming of the door prevented his going down into the foundations—the subconsciousness, as it were—of the house. We cannot be sure. At any rate, Jonah is ineffectual in all things, half this and half that, and if half-witted as well, not unlike the general run of prophets.

My Brother's Keeper has the last

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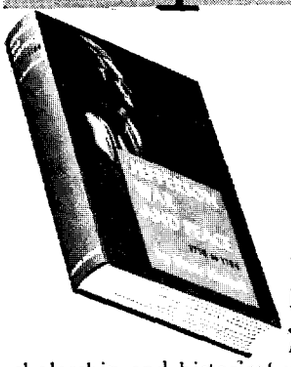

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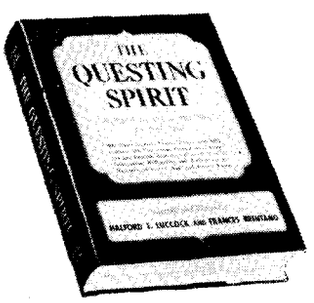

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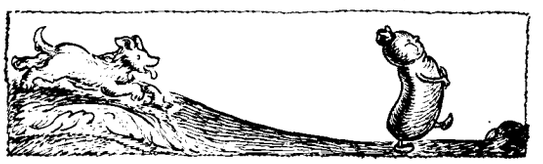

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line of the masque: "Nothing can make injustice just but mercy." This statement resolves the theme of the book, which has been a loose discussion from three points of view, with interpolations from Jesse Bel, of the mercy-justice contradiction in the nature of God. But it is useless to attempt an interpretation based merely on the main theme. The poem must be read as one might follow good conversation, which is in turn amusing, trifling, obscure, and valuable.

To the trifling parts we consign the puns, which are embarrassing and far too many. For example: "Ever since Alexander Greeced the world." Such wit arouses discomfort, not gratification. Some passages are prosy. This is largely the fault of the rhythm, which is at times shambling. Those who have heard the poet read can construe such lines into metre which is not accomplished by the printed words alone. There are deficiencies and superabundancies of syllables which give the effect of inadvertent four-stress or six-stress lines, and one has to pause over them to straighten them out. One may surmise that the poet deliberately avoids verbal suavities which might, like incidental music, distract the attention from what is being said.

Most of Keeper's speeches are marked in my copy, one of the best being his remark on that false concept of democracy which would reverse the Darwinian law and establish the survival of the unfittest:

> The future state is springing even now
> From the discovery that loss from failure
> By being spread out over everybody
> Can be made negligible.

To Keeper, also, are assigned two of the best figures in the poem: that of wisdom like a clear spring being drowned in the salt tide of argument and resuming its purity when the brine goes back, "No true source can be poisoned"; the description of the saints as "God's white light refracted into colors" (reminiscent of the famous simile in "Adonais").

"The Masque of Mercy" is rich in passages which, however baffling, may be the intention as a whole. We would conclude, in general, that Frost, with characteristic unexpectedness, has taken the stiff form of the masque to use it with the looseness of an epistle as the repository for his ideas. We look forward to a third masque in this manner.

Robert Hillyer won the 1934 Pulitzer Prize for the best book of verse published in America, is author of "A Letter to Robert Frost and Others."

Picaroon's Progress

HYMN TO WRECKAGE. Poems by Robert McKinney. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1947. 45 pp. $2.50.

Reviewed by GERARD PREVIN MEYER

HERE is a decidedly unusual book of poems, significant not in terms of technique, but because it says something universal by way of the particular—the particular in this case being China during the Japanese invasion. The dramatic nature of this "narrative series," suggested by the "List of Characters," comes out into the open in certain scenes of clear-cut dialogue. The dialogues and the soliloquies are in fact all singularly clear-cut; they thus follow the classic style of the T'ang poets, characterized by the author as "passionate in emotion and chaste in expression," a style previously described by Yen Yü in such terms as these: "The most beautiful parts of their poetry are clear, transparent, and fluttering like jade pieces in the breeze."

As Mr. McKinney sees it, every age of decadence presents the same pattern: a diminution of the "core of 'normal' citizens who embody the ideal spirit of the community" and an increase in the proportion of "cheats, wreckers, rascals and adventurers—picaroons." These "picaroons" divide into Rogues of the Middle, Rogues of the Right, and Rogues of the Left.

It is symptomatic of the changing political currents in the world today, one hopes, that the hero of this dramatic narrative, the "dilettante" Chia Shih, makes the picaroon's progress only to emerge finally as a man, no longer a Rogue, whether of the Middle, Right, or Left. Perhaps indeed, in the story of this one man—whose distance from our own civilization may enable us to regard his problem in its essential humanity—lies the answer to the question which faces all honest men in this decadent age—*i.e.*, "What must a man do in the days of change?"

There are twenty-seven stages in this progress—twenty-seven separate poems if you will. Since so much of the beauty of the telling remains inviolate in the poetry itself, I may be forgiven for setting forth enough of the story to suggest, without subtracting from, its essential richness.

The dilettante flute-player, Chia Shih, is discovered in the gardens of his grandfathers, admiring his instrument, the perfect esthete. To his flute, "so thin . . . / That, when you hold it in your hands in the evening, / It is like playing tears streaming in the wind," the air-raid siren brings unwelcome counterpoint. Flight to the South follows, to the accompaniment of falling petals and falling bombs: but the dilettante is only lightly touched: "Yellow Sea, Yellow Sea / Be a thousand miles off. / Be without petals, / But be without bombs." To Chia Shih, the river represents a path to "unbombed towns and big cities" where he may continue to give classical concerts.

But "The Yellow Sea is not as golden as I had expected," and there is an uncomfortable number of "wounded / With flies." His arrival at "Place of Safety" is celebrated in a very few disillusioned lines; soon he finds the only place open for him is "A Job in a Whorehouse Orchestra." The place of his employment takes on symbolic significance; though it has the virtue of safety (his flute "does not break. / It would if a bomb hit us"), nevertheless, it is a degraded place, becoming even more so with the entrance of the Japanese into the province and the installation of a puppet governor. Chia Shih's stomach

The Rivals

By Theodore Spencer

EACH loved him. He, confused between the two,
Hearing them cry "I love you, love you!" quivered
In impotent tension, ignorant what to do.
The love of one by love for other shivered.
His being, like a bow, felt one hand pull
The claimed wood back, as curved as it would go.
And felt another tug the cord out full,
Till each and both were almost breaking the bow.

A desperate tussle, frozen to a draw;
Each struggler planning arrows for his will,
Each thinking "Could I find the other's flaw,
This wood (this cord)—my love—will prove his skill."
Each at that bow so taut against mistakes
That both are tumbled, broken, as it breaks.

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begins to turn; he sees himself on a par with the courtesan Chao Fei-yen. Disgusted with the "singing girls" who sell themselves to the invaders, he turns from her.

When Chao Fei-yen dies for her unexpected revulsion against the Japanese commander's embraces, Chia Shih wants action against those who have dishonored and murdered his love. (There is an affecting love-moment before the catastrophe.) The "young intellectuals" meet "underground" to learn from an old organizer for Sun Yat-sen—who, inevitably, betrays them. Chia Shih alone escapes and, wounded, seeks a guerilla camp to offer his services; on the way, he considers and rejects the alternative of "A certain poet who / Lived in the old time" and who "Remarked in his verse / He wished he were dead."

Of particular note is the ex-dilettante's encounter with an old Taoist priest and his unicorn (oblique reference to T. S. Eliot, for whom the unicorn has been a symbol?). These two figures represent the mystic quietism of Lao-Tze; their only reaction to Chia's report of the war is to "chant aloud / In Mandarin titles / The beautiful names / Of innumerable plagues." To this, Chia replies: "Beauty is nice from a distance / And I used to approve of good music. / But I believe we were talking / Of war and disease / which cannot be cured / With classical rhythm." Finally, Chia Shih returns to his wrecked, burned-out village, significantly known as "Town of the Phoenix," and welcomes the signs of its destruction as symbolic of the destruction of outworn ideas which interposed no barrier to the aggressor: "Wreck the way back to the old way. / Burn, Phoenix Pagoda! Rise, Phoenix!"

Lyric Commentary

THE AMAZING YEAR: A Diary in Verse. By Selden Rodman. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1947. 113 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by FLEMING MACLIESH

THE ACHIEVEMENT which this book represents is altogether remarkable. Set in the form of a diary in verse covering a year of the poet's life, it records and explores the inner and the outer event, the personal and the topical, in a series of poems whose excitement is sustained and whose quality, at its best, is of an unmistakably high order. During a period when the difficulties and obscurities which are inherent in the work of most of the good poets have been deliberately mimicked by their inferiors as a kind of protective device against critics, a period which seems to oscillate at its extremes of platitude and of perverse concealment between obvious mediocrities, here is a book that unites a genuine lyricism, eloquent, clear, and controlled, with an evaluation of contemporary events which ranges from moving protest to an irony handled with wonderful precision.

As a notable example of the latter may be cited the poem "Epitaph," summarizing Hitler as an individual not particularly different in his innate tastes, loyalties, affections, and inclinations from the mass out of which he rose. It would seem that no more devastating comment could be made with comparable terseness and exactitude upon the nature of the age in which we live. Beside this can be set the poem "Survivor's Report," on the over-radiated subjects of our atomic experiments; "Juke Box"; "The Jolly Friar"—on the typical, progressive clergyman who looks to the basement of his church for a social platform rather than to the altar for prayer—and, with a somewhat different inflection, "On the Border," whose uncompleted last line employs, in a kind of tour de force involving time and place, silence to complete itself and its unnerving speculation.

At an opposite pole are those lyrical poems springing from the purely personal and subjective.

Day's equilibrium slowly rocked;
The teeth of Sense and Dream opposed,
The shutter of your eyelid closed
And time's gear locked.

To lift this out of context is to do it something less than justice.

If the poems in this category celebrate an emotion which is supposed to drive almost anyone into song, they have, in their spontaneity and sensitivity, at least something of Rilke's definition of "Singen im Wahrheit."

The best examples of that, however, lie in the range of poems whose subject matter is the outer order, the age itself, and which deal with it not from a detached irony but from a tragic sense of identity, of participation. These express a feeling whose depth demands respect and whose nature is often noble. And perhaps it is from a collateral, and aristocratic, sense of responsibility, of obligation, that there derive what seem to me certain misapprehensions as to the nature of the reality we confront and the kind of action required to set the time right. For instance, a criticism of Aldous Huxley implied in stating that he cannot escape the world by renouncing it seems to me wholly inapplicable. It does not take into account what world Huxley is renouncing or from what he is trying to escape (he has certainly not turned his back on the affairs of men, since he embraces the doctrine of total responsibility and, moreover, continues to take some part even in the most literal sense by the publication of work whose influence and importance is considerable). My point of disagreement here and elsewhere is with that concept of reality on which the poet naturally establishes his standard of acceptable deviation.

It should be obvious that in a work such as this whose virtues and felicities are not laboriously inscribed in minuscule, on the inside of a ring, there is bound to be a certain incidence of bad lines and weak poems. The weakest, in my estimation, is "Leda," where the employment of a meter inevitably associated with barroom or nonsense-verse, gives, though the subject is completely serious, a

"Bridge is easy . . . you put down a card and I kick you in the shins."

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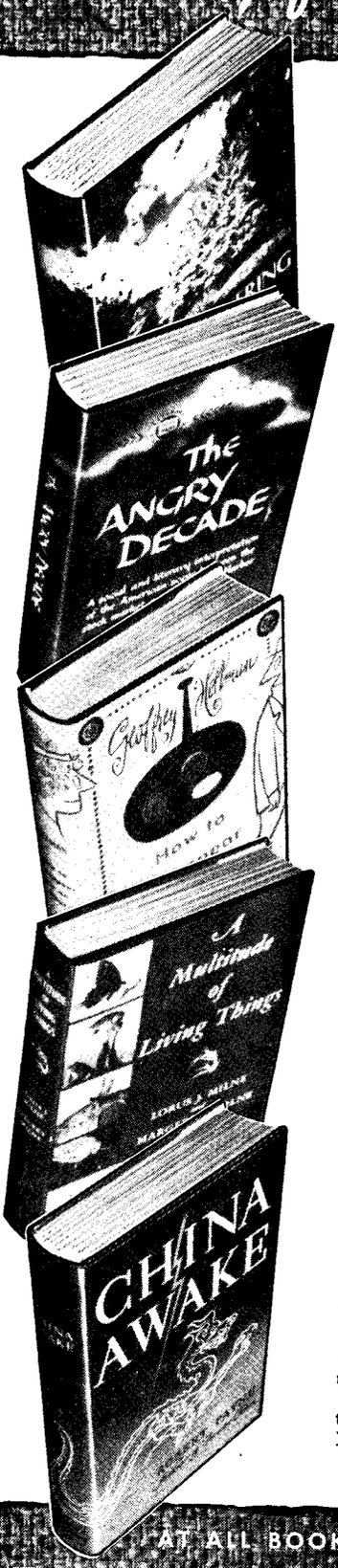

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net effect which is comic. "V-Letter to Karl Shapiro in Australia," though it contains some fine lines, does not seem to me successful, particularly in manner. And there are lines in other poems which strain or overreach by heavily weighting a word or phrase which carries the obvious connotation of drama. Such faults are occasional, minor, incidental. They are to a degree irrelevant beside the total accomplishment which is as poorly indicated by excerpts as the technical excellencies are poorly indicated by the statement that he has employed almost every verse-form and nearly always with success.

Mr. Rodman, to use an inexact and inadequate figure, is on the firing-line and he is calling his shots and they are going steadily into the black. It is a kind of imperative for anyone who cares anything about the state of contemporary verse, anyone who is excited, uplifted, and reassured by the first-rate in whatever form, to witness this.

Free Spirit's Trail

THE KID. By Conrad Aiken. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce. 1947. 32 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by DAVID DAICHES

TAKING off from William Blackstone, the "solitary bookish recluse" who came to America from England and in 1630 was found in possession of what is now Boston Common by Boston's first settlers, Conrad Aiken tries to trace the working of that free spirit in subsequent American history. He does this in a series of nine poems, in which he develops the significance of Blackstone's attitude in an increasingly metaphorical manner, until at the end the spirit of "the Kid" has become identified with a variety of characteristic American modes of thought and activity from martyrdom for the sake of freedom of conscience (represented by an allusion to the grim story of the destruction of the Quaker Southwick family by the magistrates of Massachusetts) to Western pioneering, railroading, and the literary life of nineteenth-century New England.

All the poems except the first are written in some variety of rhymed couplet, which flows easily and shows considerable craftsmanship; the points are made in a quiet, almost brooding manner, with no flaming into meaning but a steady discursive commentary in the course of which the meaning is eloquently conveyed, reinforced by a nature imagery whose function is to suggest the major geographical influences that have shaped certain American attitudes and certain aspects of American folklore. Mr. Aiken varies the tempo of his verse skilfully, ranging from the violence of

> Who saw the Kid when he rose from the east
> riding the bridled and fire-bright Beast?
> heard him shout from the surf-gold, *streaming*
> crupper and bit, the surcingle gleaming . . .

to the meditative

> Dark was the forest, dark was the mind;
> dark the trail that he stooped to find:
> dark, dark, dark, in the midnight lost,
> in self's own midnight, the seeking ghost.

But throughout all the poems runs a quiet eloquence, a restrained rhetorical quality which at its best impresses by technical accomplishment and persuasive imagery but which often fails to communicate more than a surface meaning because of undue facility. A kind of meditative smoothness has always been a characteristic of Mr. Aiken's poetry, and even with a theme which is in a sense heroic this note tends to emerge. The reader has the feeling that by a supreme effort of his art the poet might have been able to pull together the nine spreading poems of this volume into one magnificent and reverberating lyric, instead of spilling his means progressively, with an equable but disturbing skill. But this kind of discursive poetry where the meaning flows round the reader and does not take him by storm represents a considerable artistic achievement, and Mr. Aiken remains true to his own tradition of craftsmanship in spite of the definite limitations of that tradition.

Accident of Chaos

OTHER SKIES. By John Ciardi. Boston: Atlantic Monthly Press. 1947. 83 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by
GERARD PREVIN MEYER

IN "Elegy Just in Case" (one of the poems in this, his second book), John Ciardi establishes his place in both the world scene and the poetic landscape:

> Here lie Ciardi's pearly bones
> In their ripe organic mess.
> Jungle blown, his chromosomes
> Breed to a new address.

As the jungle reference and the non-heroic version of death-in-battle place the author in the second "war generation" of our century, so the irony (by Eliot, out of Laforgue) and the general tone reveal the modern poet. In assimilating both the old poets and the older new poets to his own purposes, he has learned how to tune his instrument so that it can give the clearest of voice to the most disparate experiences. And luckily for his chances of gaining the widest kind of audience, Ciardi's personal history, rising in key with the winning of an Avery Hopwood award only a few years ago, reached a crescendo "by an accident of chaos" some time between 1941 and 1945, when he became "Sgt. Ciardi," gunner on a B-29 in the Pacific theatre of war.

Unlike Eliot, who is only one of his "ancestors," Ciardi likes humanity well enough to satirize with warm wit, rather than with cold distaste. There is throughout his work a personality that expands to encompass the experiences of his fellows.

His considerable wit shows itself not only in the surprising juxtapositions of images, ideas, and language (for example, he knows the trick of dissolving conversational plain speech into the "dry salvages" of modern technology and coming out again into new poetic meaning), but also in the rhythms and stanzaic forms:

> Under the taut and tabulated stars
> I stand in barracks shadow like a pool
> Apprenticed to a sextant and the wars
> Where even murder must be learned at school,
> And sky, a shadow to be memorized,
> Charts the shadows we had not surmised.

But make no mistake—he deals in serious matters. His sense of the ironic gives him that authority (only the humorous should be allowed to be serious). Thus his sentiment strikes the right note, whether he grieves for a lost comrade, or writes a love poem, or considers the view from a hospital bed.

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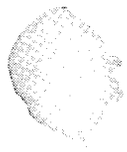

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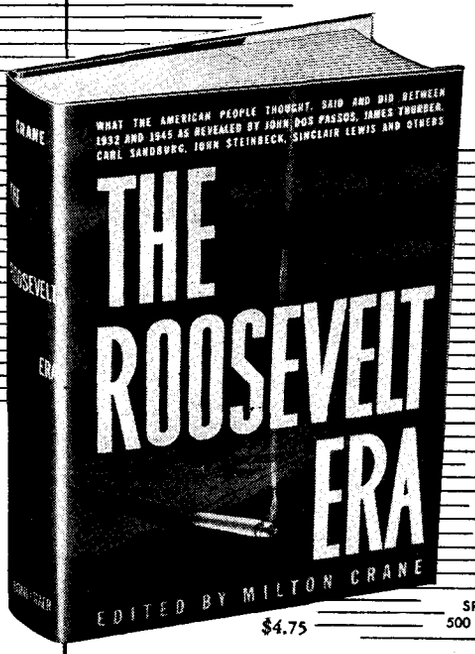
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The World.

Books on the "situation" these days fall into two categories. The first category attempts to discuss that level in which nations do their pulling and tugging and mauling—the level of power politics, spheres of influence, plot-and-counter-plot. Then there is the upper and more consequential level—much more realistic in terms of its importance and meaning to the peoples of the world, but much more remote in terms of its recognition by the established leaders. That upper level is the one which takes the long historical, philosophical, and anthropological view. The books reviewed below clearly belong to the first level. They represent important reading, but they would be even more valuable if read in conjunction with such "upper-level" books as "Peace or Anarchy," by Cord Meyer, Jr., the symposium "Our Emergent Civilization," edited by Ruth Nanda Anshen, and "Web of Government," by Robert MacIver.

But Germany Wins the Treaties

BRIDGES OVER THE RHINE. By Ernst Erich Noth. Translated by Rita Reil and Hugh Corbett. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1947. 317 pp. $3.

Reviewed by HENRY B. KRANZ

THIS book is a passionate warning against the German economic recovery program of the Western powers. The author of "Bridges Over the Rhine" fervently decries the "crime," as he puts it, of "being prepared not only in Germany but against Germany which is the same thing." Mr. Noth works from the realization that the central problem of the world peace is the German problem and says: "While the United States and Russia are struggling for Germany, the greatest chance to carry off the victory is on the side of Germany herself."

Ernst Erich Noth, born in Berlin, left Germany in 1933 for France, where he wrote no fewer than eight books, all dealing with the psychology of German nationalism. He came to this country in 1941 and is now Chief of NBC's German shortwave station. The first part of "Bridges Over the Rhine" is addressed to the French, the second to the American people.

The French are told that their statesmen should beware of the way in which Germany is allowed to "rear her head again while the victors are disunited." This does not mean, says Mr. Noth, that France should not be moderate. What is needed is a just, not a conciliatory, peace. Only then will there be new bridges over the Rhine. Turning to the "realists" who explain that German factories must be reactivated so that French workshops can be heated, Mr. North urges them to remember that there will be no durable peace unless it "rules the heart and brains of the German people." He proposes, rather vaguely, to change the elements which "compose the magnetic kernel of Prussia by submitting her to a skilful process of transsubstantiation, both of matter and of the spirit." He does not go into details but admits that any re-education of the German people will be difficult as long as they are offered the social philosophy of "four different models of democracy." Most observers would rather speak of a battle between *two* philosophies: Democracy and Totalitarianism.

The author's views on the "Red Peril" are clearly defined, however. He does not dismiss its existence but believes that the best way to fight it is to build a stronger democracy with "greater political justice, more liberty, and greater faith"—failing to mention greater economic democracy.

—*Gray in* The Chicago Sun and Times.

The Cold War Warms Up

The second part of the book, less eloquently written but more precise, charges that the Americans have hardly made any effort to "think the peace," that they are constantly improvising, and show more concern for economics than for the other aspects of international politics. He believes that the United States forces of occupation cannot remain permanently in Germany and it would therefore be folly to convert the three western zones into a bulwark against communism. This view comes near to that of Walter Lippmann who recently proposed that we should not aim at a Germany to stop Russia but a Germany neutralized as between Russia and the West—even if we find it impossible to agree with the Russians on a treaty of peace.

"Bridges Over the Rhine" does not offer any concrete solution to the German problem. The value of the book, written in a somewhat oratorical but very impressive style, lies in its stimulating vigor, its honesty, and its general liberalism rather than in its novelty. For this reason and for its timeliness it deserves a place on the shelf of every student of foreign affairs.

Canterbury Tales

SOVIET RUSSIA SINCE THE WAR. By Dr. Hewlett Johnson: Dean of Canterbury. New York: Boni & Gaer, Inc. 1947. 270 pp. $3.

Reviewed by SIDNEY S. HARCAVE

DR. HEWLETT JOHNSON, Dean of Canterbury, is that *rara avis*, the Briton of high social status who deviates markedly from the norms of his class. Probably because of the rarity of the phenomenon the British are inclined to tolerate the eccentricities of their upper-class mavericks, even if the maverick is a member of the editorial board of the London *Daily Worker*. Dr. Johnson writes with the assurance born both of inner conviction and status. One need not therefore look for equivocation or circumlocution in this third of the Dean's works on the Soviet Union. "Soviet Russia Since the War" is not a work of inquiry but of affirmation.

The title is somewhat of a misnomer. Dr. Johnson, to be sure, visited Russia in the late spring and early summer of 1945, just after the conclusion of hostilities with Germany, but his report is not so much an analysis of post-war Russia as a restate-

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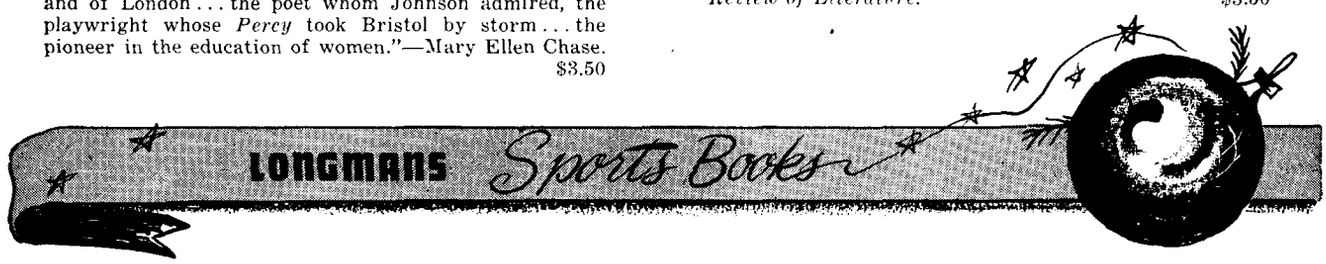

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ment of his belief in the Soviet Union. The journey serves merely as a convenient peg.

"Soviet Russia Since the War" must be considered on three levels: as a work of faith, as a commentary on Soviet institutions, and, finally, as a travel account. Since matters of belief are not susceptible of argument, one can only rephrase the words of Heywood Broun—or was it Aristophanes? "This book will appeal to the kind of people who like this kind of book."

Much of the Dean's account is a useful, if simplified, summary of the Soviet interpretation of Soviet institutional life. This is important, for every analysis must begin with the official theory. In every society, however, there is a gap between theory and reality, in the U.S.S.R. no less than in the U.S.A. Dr. Johnson, however, like the Webbs before him, takes no more than a bare step beyond theory. There have been shortcomings; these have been corrected. There are shortcomings; these will be corrected. Just as there is official theory, so is there official self-criticism.

One illustration of the Dean's approach will suffice. He finds Soviet institutional life (with the exception, we suppose, of the army, the navy, the church, and the stage) characterized by democratic centralism. Dr. Johnson asserts that power flows upwards, from the basic rank and file organization, the village Soviet, the party cell, the trade union local, to the highest elected bodies, the Supreme Soviet, the Central Committee of the Communist Party, the All Union Central Council of Trade Unions. The highest elected bodies synthesize the wishes of the governed and then, with delegated authority, proceed to implement these wishes. This theory represents a goal rather than a fact. There is a basis for the belief that a lively political life is to be found in the lowest Soviet organs, but not for any assertion that power or policy flow upward from them.

As a travel account "Soviet Russia Since the War" is commendable for its warm, keen observations as well as for the freshness of its material. Dr. Johnson was afforded facilities reserved for Very Important People and Very Important Friends of the U.S.S.R. He received not only a visa but one which permitted travel in the trans-Caucasus and central Asia. Glimpses of the old and new are given: the election of the Catholics of the Armenian Church, and a new hydro-electric plant, the Iman of the central Asian Moslems, a new cotton mill. "Soviet Russia Since the War" is not a memorable work but it does contain many nuggets.

The War. *Comparatively few of the recent memoirs and histories of World War II have dealt with the Far East. Admiral Halsey's life story, appearing not long after Patton's similar memoirs of war in the West, will supplement C. Vann Woodward's "The Battle of Leyte Gulf" and James A. Field, Jr.'s "The Japanese at Leyte Gulf." MacArthur's Japan is for the first time seriously assessed in Richard Lauterbach's recent "Danger from the East," which reports brilliantly on the impact of our Far Eastern policy. Two personal views of Eastern operations—John Purcell's novel of wartime: "Class Report," (see page 40) and Elliot Chaze's paratrooper's-eye view of the Japanese occupation will help fill out the meagerly-told story. Watch, too, for an account of "The Marines' War" due in January from that master narrator of Naval operations, Fletcher Pratt.*

The Halsey Legend

ADMIRAL HALSEY'S STORY. By Fleet Admiral William F. Halsey and Lt. Comdr. J. Bryan, III. New York: Whittlesey House. 1947. 292 *pp.* $4.

Reviewed by ROBERT A. LOW, LT. COMDR., U. S. NAVAL RESERVE

OCTOBER 18, 1942, is a memorable day for thousands of Americans who were fighting the Japanese in the South Pacific, for it was on that day that Admiral William F. Halsey took command of the area. Announcement of Halsey's appointment almost instantly wiped out the feeling of hopelessness and despair that filled our Marines on Guadalcanal and the Naval forces backing them up. His drastic and daring counterattacks in the next weeks changed the entire complexion of the Pacific war. The Japanese were turned back in their efforts and soon our forces were on the offensive.

"Admiral Halsey's Story" is the life picture of this extraordinary man who when he assumed this important command was already a legendary hero within the service. He went on through three years of fighting to enhance his reputation and came out of the war America's greatest Naval figure since Admiral Dewey. Admiral Halsey was that rare leader who earned the military reputation of a Patton and retained the confidence and devotion of an Eisenhower.

It is well to point to the situation that existed when Admiral Halsey took over in the South Pacific, because it demonstrates so clearly the tremendous respect already held for him even before his overwhelming victories in 1944 and 1945. The name "Bull Halsey" was even then all but a magic name.

Following the landing of Marine Corps troops on Guadalcanal August 7, 1942, the United States Pacific Fleet had lost in the area a carrier, four heavy cruisers (one Australian serving under our command), five destroyers, and four transports. The Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington ordered the 'canal to be held at any cost to keep the enemy from our lines of communication to Australia. Morale on Guadalcanal and throughout the area had collapsed. The cry went up. "Where is the Navy?"

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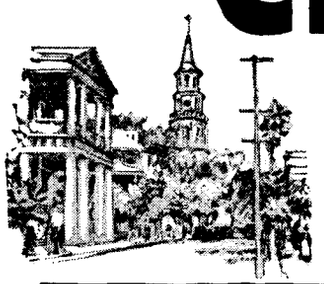

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ly the trials of prosecuting a war under divided command—in this case the conflict with General MacArthur who commanded the Southwest Pacific. Each commanded all the services—Army, Navy, and Marine—within the geographical limits outlined by the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington. For a time this meant that Halsey was supreme commander east of the 160th parallel cutting through the Solomon area and MacArthur was supreme commander west of this line. Halsey was responsible to Admiral Nimitz in Pearl Harbor; General MacArthur was responsible to the high command in Washington.

"It is vital for the Navy never to expose itself against the perils of divided command in the same area," Admiral Halsey writes.

It was this question of divided command that Halsey blames for the near catastrophe of the Battle for Leyte Gulf when remnants of the Japanese fleet including battleships closed in on a force of our escort carriers whose "heavy" armament consisted of one five-inch mount each. "Although our naval power in the Western Pacific (1945)," he points out, "was such that we could have challenged the combined fleets of the world, the fact that it was not coordinated under any single authority was an invitation which disaster nearly accepted."

This book will make fascinating reading for every American who served under Halsey in the Pacific. To learn what went on behind the wartime newspaper reports, here is an incomparable document. Admiral Halsey has written simply and modestly a book that will further enhance the Halsey legend.

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT: No. 233

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 233 will be found in the next issue.

GFRXWGV WC CF VFFQ UC

WR CBBAC NBDFEBXUGQ.—V.

BZWFR.

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 232

Look round the habitable world! how few
Know their own good; or knowing it, pursue.
JOHN DRYDEN.

American Wards

THE STAINLESS STEEL KIMONO. By Elliot Chaze. New York: Simon & Schuster, Inc. 1947. 207 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by HARRISON SMITH

A FEW years ago the War Department took over from his wife and two children a young reporter for the Associated Press, editing a night wire out of New Orleans, turned him into a tough paratrooper, and sent him to Japan along with seven of his case-hardened and death-defying sky mates. If Elliot Chaze was as used to brutality and as handy with his fists as the rest of them when he was grounded with his mates in the smells

and mud of defeated Japan, at least he had the seeing-eye, a perverse sense of humor, and deep-rooted sympathy for the underdog. He has had the good sense to leave amateur speculation on international politics alone. He makes no attempt to understand Japan or the Japanese as a conquered people but confines himself to what he heard, saw, felt, and smelled. His book, outside of its quality as slightly bawdy entertainment, has therefore a special value. It records the surface impressions of a deliberately case-hardened man who is determined to write a lively and realistic narrative. The first sentence of his foreword illustrates his mood perfectly, "I believe that the reaction of most occupation troops in Japan is that of a person suddenly handed a brimming bedpan and told to guard its contents carefully." He adds, "The occupation troops devise their own methods for forgetting that the thing entrusted to them seems hardly worth the trouble."

The thing entrusted to them, of course, is a country of some seventy-five million people, which without colonial and world markets could not support fifty million in any degree of well-being. It is a country wrested suddenly from the grasp of a brutal fascist and military despotism, with an hereditary divinity as its emperor, turned over to an occupying army of American boys who had been taught that the Japanese were half savage apes and half toy men and women. There is no indication in Mr. Chaze's book that Japan is one of the most beautiful countries in the world, that its people had hauled themselves out of medievalism in a little more than half a century, had performed prodigies of industrialization, and had at the same time retained habits of docility, obedience, and resignation, and that innate love of beauty in miniature that made their impoverished country one of the most charming in the world.

In Mr. Chaze's book there is nothing left except their obedience, patience, and passive resistance. In spite of the brashness with which he writes the pathos comes through and at the same time the innate and rather shy kindness of the average American toward these strange little people, smelling of fish because they had to eat the loathsome flesh of the octopus, and of dung because it was spread over their fields or because sanitation had broken down.

There is the story, for example, of the starving boy picked up and made into a petted messboy who fell in love with his roller skates; the Japanese night-club performer who lived week-ends with a paratrooper, and who was finally almost killed by returned Japanese soldiers; the story of the girl with shining steel teeth which another bold paratrooper found in his pockets the next morning. Even in his bawdiest tales there is some strain of pathos. The savagery, the brutality is of one uniformed American against another; if the Japanese were beaten or slain by Americans it does not appear anywhere in this book.

Most of Mr. Chaze's story is concerned with the astounding ways in which these bored, homesick, and tough young men managed to survive, to keep sane, and to retain their humanity. If they seem a good deal like Western barbarians playing with half-broken and dirty Oriental dolls the author cannot be blamed for the impression he has created. It is a book to be read for amusement, as he intended, but one in which you will find out something about the lives of Americans abroad and about America's abject and stubborn subjects in Japan.

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JOHN G. WINANT

(*Continued from page 21*)

week end in December 1941. When Mr. Winant declared that war between the United States and Japan was probable, Mr. Churchill replied vehemently: "If they declare war on you, we shall declare war on them within the hour." Then they heard, over a fifteen-dollar American radio, the announcement that the Japanese had attacked Pearl Harbor. "Churchill," Mr. Winant relates, "jumped to his feet and started for the door with the announcement, 'We shall declare war on Japan!' "

Anthony Eden impressed Mr. Winant as "simple, truthful, and courageous." Their relations were intimate and constant. The Ambassador and the Foreign Minister arranged that the American Embassy should deal directly with the various ministers of the British Government rather than follow the traditional cumbersome practice of channeling all business through the Foreign Office—an innovation that saved an incalculable amount of time.

"Letter from Grosvenor Square" is invaluable as an "inside story" about Britain in a time of crisis; but it is even more significant for what it reveals about its sincere and modest author. It has been my lot to spend thirty-five years in politics; and during those thirty-five years I never met a man more unselfishly and exclusively considerate of the good of the community than John Winant. The man as I knew him shines through every page of his book. Although he worked during 1941 as if the United States were already an equal partner with Great Britain in its war on Germany, he never lost sight of the fact that his client was the United States. None of our ambassadors has ever been more genuinely American.

At the time of his death, Mr. Winant was planning another volume which would tell the rest of his experiences in wartime Britain. One cannot read "Letter from Grosvenor Square" without regretting that its sequel will never be written, and that the American people should have lost one of their ablest and purest-minded leaders.

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Seeing Things

IF YOU PRICK US

THE BOY never forgot it. How could he? Some wounds are beyond healing. Even when, as a literary critic with a world reputation, George Brandes sat down to write his reminiscences, this one still hurt. The initiation which inflicted it was an appalling experience. After the passage of a hundred years, it hurts us today merely to read about it.

As a little child in Copenhagen, Brandes would occasionally encounter on walks with his nurse a grinning boy who shook his fist and made faces at him. The young Brandes tried at first not to notice him. As time went on, however, he became more and more aware of one word the boy shouted. He asked his nurse what it meant. "Oh, nothing," she replied. "It's a very bad word."

Finally, when he had heard the same word shouted again, Brandes sought out his mother on reaching home. "What does it mean?" he asked. "Jew. Jews are people." "Nasty people?" "Yes," said the mother, "sometimes, but not always." "Could I see a Jew?" "Yes, very easily," the mother replied. Whereupon without another word she bent over her son and lifted him up quickly in front of the large oval mirror above the sofa. Brandes shrieked as he looked at his own small face in the glass. His mother relented; she put him down. But the child's horror was such that, as Brandes later phrased it, his mother "regretted not having prepared me."

It would, of course, be comforting to cite so nightmarish an incident as a horror belonging to the outmoded past; as something that could, and did, occur in Europe a hundred years ago, but that could not possibly happen either there or here today. The ruins, however, of Warsaw's Ghetto, the mixed trains of Hitler's Germany, the ovens at Dachau and Buchenwald, the growing anti-Semitism Rebecca West has recently noted in London, and the palpable need in this country for such films as "Crossfire" and "Gentleman's Agreement"* make this impossible.

In any land devoted to the principles of freedom, in any age assumed to be enlightened, in any country pretending to be civilized, no child should be asked to endure what young George Brandes faced. Nor should any man die, as does the young Jewish soldier whose final moments overseas are described by John Garfield in "Gentleman's Agreement." He had thought of himself as an American, this soldier. He was wearing an American uniform and fighting as an American against the Hitlerian myth of the Master Race. Yet, when he was fatally wounded, the last word he ever heard was spoken by a fellow-American who hated him for being a Jew. The word was "sheeney."

There are those, and they at best are Milquetoasts, who feel that the wisest policy on the subject of racial hatreds is to say nothing. "Let sleeping dogs lie" is their motto. They appear to subscribe to it even when the dogs, as in this instance, are curs, snarling, vicious, capable of infinite damage, and infected with a disease more dangerous than rabies.

The elder Joseph Pulitzer had an answer for those who accused him of debasing the press by the sensational methods to which he resorted as a reformer. It is quoted by Lloyd Morris in his fascinating "Postscript to Yesterday." "There is not a crime," wrote Pulitzer, "there is not a dodge, there is not a trick, there is not a swindle, there is not a vice which does not live by secrecy. Get these things out into the open, describe them, attack them, ridicule them in the press, and sooner or later public opinion will sweep them away."

This seems to me the perfect reply to those who believe that darkness is healthier than sunlight, that diseases are cured by being ignored, that what is fetid is made sweet by the comfortable process of pretending that it does not exist, and that the dodging of the truth rather than the truth itself shall make men free.

The newspapers have no monopoly on the responsibilities that go with the public statement of public wrongs. The stage, the screen, the radio, and literature all share the same burden and are blessed with the identical opportunity if they take themselves seriously, and would be taken seriously. Race prejudice is a vice; a vice which, whether it becomes criminal in its activities or not, is, even when dormant, a crime against the democratic belief. It is a matter of inherited prejudices, of malconditioned reflexes, of stupidities which persist mainly because their stupidity has never been exposed.

THE screen and the radio have, for the most part, avoided the subject in the past. They have not dropped it like a hot potato. They have considered it too hot a potato to pick up. As great mass media, intimidated by the size of their audiences, they have lacked the courage familiar in fiction

"So beguiling is Celeste Holm that one cannot forgive Gregory Peck, not only for his indifferent performance, but more especially for failing to marry her."

* *GENTLEMAN'S AGREEMENT, based on the novel by Laura Z. Hobson. Screen play by Moss Hart. Directed by Elia Kazan. Produced by Darryl F. Zanuck for Twentieth Century-Fox Pictures. With a cast including Gregory Peck, Dorothy McGuire, John Garfield, Celeste Holm, Anne Revere, June Havoc, Albert Dekker, Jane Wyatt, Nicholas Joy, etc. At the Mayfair.*

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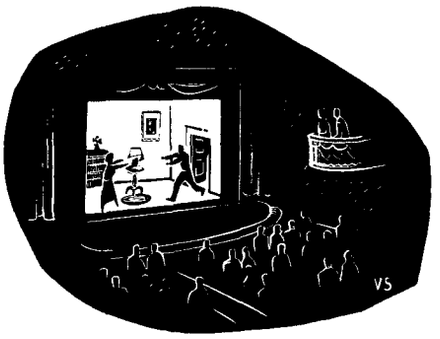

and on the stage. But of recent months the movies, at any rate, have apparently decided to grow up.

"Crossfire" and "Gentleman's Agreement" are happy indications of Hollywood's decision to put away childish things—now and then. Perhaps what is most exciting about both films is that they dare to speak publicly for the first time on a subject about which moviegoers have long spoken privately. The result is as startling as if a backward child suddenly began to quote verbatim the whole of John Stuart Mill's essay "On Liberty."

The surprise, more truly the shock, with which one hears such everyday words as "Jew," "Catholic," "Protestant" emerge from a sound track in a darkened movie palace is no compliment to the motion pictures. Instead, it is a comment—and a sad one—on the kind of fare upon which they ordinarily starve us. It is a measure, too, of the distance we have grown accustomed to having them maintain between reality as we know it and make-believe as they manufacture it.

Both "Crossfire" and "Gentleman's Agreement" are derived from novels. The former is based on Richard Brooks's "The Brick Foxhole"; the second on Laura Hobson's best seller. Mr. Brooks must be as amazed by what has been done to his book as Mrs. Hobson must be pleased with what has happened to hers.

"Crossfire"'s story remains in its major details the same tale of murder told by Mr. Brooks in "The Brick Foxhole." The difference is that what was written as an interesting war yarn has been rewritten to become an engrossing melodrama dealing with anti-Semitism. The pivotal character who is killed by the servicemen he has befriended is now a kindly and philosophical Jew rather than a middle-aged homosexual who has angered them. The Jew, admirably played by that unfailingly excellent actor, Sam Levene, is murdered in the film because of the hatred of his race which suddenly takes possession of one of the drunken soldiers. Anti-Semitism in its most acute and violent form is, in other words, the motive for the trime. Moreover, this

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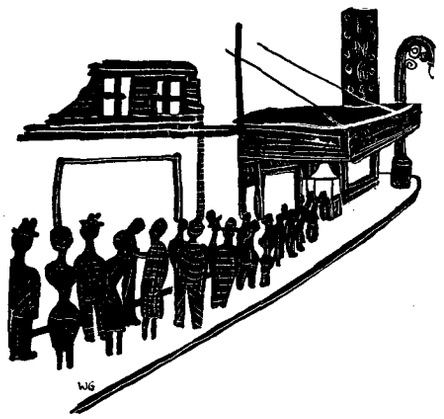

motive must be discovered, and exposed, before an innocent soldier, at first suspected of the murder, can be cleared.

Because of the excitements of its action, because it has (except in motivation) so much in common with many pursuit films, "Crossfire" is a movie which, in spite of touching upon a problem, comes more readily under the heading of entertainment (as that nebulous word is customarily misunderstood) than does "Gentleman's Agreement." For this very reason Mrs. Hobson's story represents an undertaking larger both in its difficulties and ambitions. It may have its scattered interludes written for the sake of amusement. It may tell in unconventional terms a conventional love story about a boy who meets, loses, and gets a girl. Yet it remains so faithful to its theme that it takes few recesses from it. Anti-Semitism is its plot; ideas are its concern; and instances of prejudice supply its action. This is at once its audacity and significance. Yes, and why it must be welcomed as innovational.

Although I cannot pretend to have found "Gentleman's Agreement" a satisfying film throughout, I must admit I did find it a picture of uncommon interest. Moss Hart's screen adaptation seems to me to have sharpened, hence bettered, Mrs. Hobson's story. Elia Kazan's direction, though lagging at the start, is sympathetic. Moreover, there are excellent performances by John Garfield as a returned Jewish veteran; by Anne Revere as an unstereotyped stage mother; and by Celeste Holm as a hard-boiled magazine editor. Indeed, so beguiling is Miss Holm that I, for one, cannot bring myself to forgive Gregory Peck not only for his indifferent performance but most especially for failing to marry her.

I read Mrs. Hobson's book with mixed emotions. It is a healthy book to have in circulation. My sympathy with its theme is complete. My admiration is also genuine for the way in which Mrs. Hobson scores her truest triumph by demonstrating the racial intolerance which haunts the hearts and minds of nice people who think of themselves as liberals. I grant, too, that Mrs. Hobson can tell a story adroitly in popular terms. I, however, must confess that I regret the slick magazine quality in much of her writing.

What really bothers me in Mrs. Hobson's book is what bothers me in the film made from it. In both instances I am conscious of having been presented with no more than a laundry list of indignities to which Jews are submitted in this country. Although happy to have such dirty linen aired, I wish Mrs. Hobson had also shown us the many sources of rightful pride special to the Jews, no less than the humiliations to which they are exposed by Gentiles who fancy themselves democrats.

In the movie as in the novel, I distrust Mrs. Hobson's plot device of having her hero a Gentile who pretends to be a Jew for eight weeks in order to understand the sufferings of the Jewish people. A device is at best a stunt for display, a trick to capture the attention, a deliberately false approach to the truth. However

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serviceable for storytelling Mrs. Hobson may have found such a contrived situation, it seems to me to condemn her novel to do no more than scratch the surface of her subject. The inner anxieties of persecuted races cannot be explored by tourists. They are known only to those who dwell as natives among such slights, apprehensions, and shameful humiliations.

I find myself disturbed by another aspect of Mrs. Hobson's central character. He is supposed to be a brilliant journalist, thoroughly conversant with the world as it is. Yet he must not have got around as much as his editor thought or Mrs. Hobson would have us believe. The surprise of this alert journalist at his discovery of how real and shocking are the meannesses directed against the Jews even by enlightened people in this country is naïve, to say the least. He must have gone through life with cotton in his ears and blinders on his eyes. If his ignorance is comfortable for him, it can claim its values for us in both the novel and the film. It may snatch the blinders off countless unseeing eyes in America, and force millions to listen to what cries for the widest public statement.

It is because it dares to call real abuses by their proper names and to skywrite some of the ugly, underground truths of racial intolerance in this country that "Gentleman's Agreement," though often indifferent as a film, can claim importance. It establishes a new relationship between screen and audience, and grants to the movies a new dimension in their interest. It shows us, however awkwardly, the direction they may take if only they are not frightened from their course by Congressional investigations.

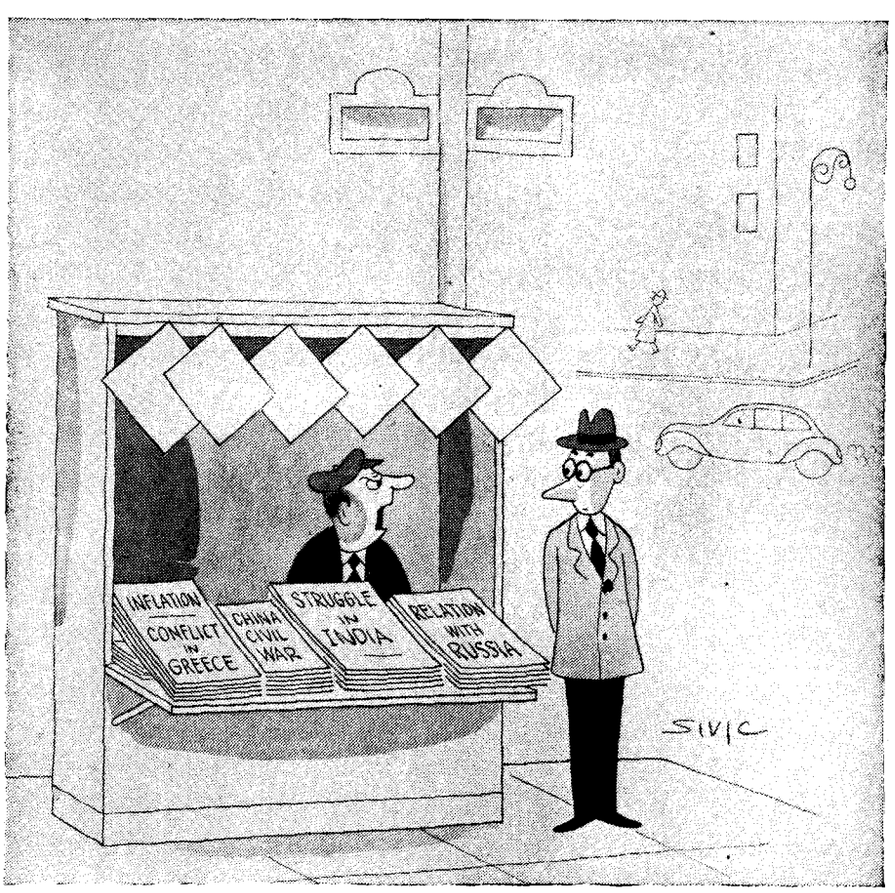
How great is the need for such a film as "Gentleman's Agreement" is perhaps tragically illustrated by an experience Moss Hart had when the picture had just been completed.

"You know," a stagehand is reported to have said to Mr. Hart, "I've loved working on this picture of yours. Usually I play gin-rummy with the boys when scenes are being shot. But not this time. This time I couldn't leave the set. The picture has such a wonderful moral I didn't want to miss it."

"Really," beamed Mr. Hart, pleased not only as a scenarist but as a reformer. "That's fine. What's the moral as you see it?"

"Well, I tell you," replied the stagehand. "Henceforth I'm always going to be good to Jewish people because you never can tell when they will turn out to be Gentiles."

JOHN MASON BROWN.



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The New Recordings

COMPOSITION, PERFORMER, ALBUM NUMBER, NUMBER OF RECORDS	ENGINEERING		PERFORMANCE AND CONTENT
	Recording Technique	*Surface*	
DEBUSSY, SONATA #1 (cello & piano); MINUET (PETITE SUITE). Raya Garbousova; Artur Balsam, pf. Concert Hall A10 (2 *pl*) (*Subscription*)	The vinylite problem is well solved by Concert Hall; theirs is now very uniform, less ticking, few imperfections. Cello recording here is outstanding.	*AA+*	(See Sonatas #2, #3 in Columbia albums.) This first of late sonatas is simpler, more like earlier Debussy. Fine cello writing. Excellent performance.
BEETHOVEN, SCOTTISH SONGS. Wm. Dyer-Bennet; I. Strasfogel, pf. S. Frankel, vl. J. Bernstein, vc. Concert Hall A9 (4 *pl*) (*Subscription*)	Seems better quality than (unlimited ed.) Irish Songs of last year. Where Irish album blasted occasionally this one doesn't. Piano slightly tinny.	*AA+*	In B's best chamber style, liberally furnished with some beautiful accpts. for the instrumental trio. Dyer-B. nasal but does excellent job.
BARBER, CELLO SONATA. Raya Garbousova, Erich Itor Kahn. Concert Hall B1 (2 *pl*) (*subscription*)	More heavily recorded than Debussy (above); otherwise similar. Fine, big cello-piano effects.	*AA+*	An "early," Romantic Barber, Brahms-like but with much of the contemporary in its structure. Cello treated darkly, handsomely.
HINDEMITH, QUARTET #4, OPUS 32 (1924). Guilet Quartet. Concert Hall B2 (3 *pl*) (*subscription*)	Upholds Concert Hall's already leading position in quartet recording. Has big, rich sound; wide range, but softly so.	*AA+*	Spang in middle of noisy '20's—as harsh as H. gets (not very). But clear-cut H. themes, skilful treatment, make good listening on repeat hearings.

"A TOUGH KIND OF SNOBBERY"

CONCERT HALL SOCIETY begins its second subscription year (B series above) with an established reputation in a new field and a trace of unsettled controversy. This year the subscribers, due to manufacturing improvements, may number 3,000 instead of 2,000—a larger list, but still clearly "limited." The new subscription program (with some alternate choices) equals the first year's in value, with a broadened range of interest. As before, in addition to hitherto unrecorded classics, Concert Hall stresses contemporary music, in a way unwonted hereabouts but highly desirable nevertheless. Especially for those who—at last—can really get to know well a good-sized batch of recent music. How seldom do we ever have the chance to compare the new music and the old on this basis of *equal experience*, the only fair test!

Possibly the Concert Hall listings have inclined too much towards the piano or works including the piano, that being still the weakest of recorded instruments. Not all the recordings have been technically up to the very high claims. In practice the company has employed the same musicians (and their same instruments) perhaps too often for variety. Granted too that Concert Hall's choice of music reflects its own tastes and is not entirely catholic. But then why should it be? These are minor issues. So long as Concert Hall furnishes interesting material with reasonable variety and presents good technical standards no one need complain.

As to the "snob appeal" issue, I've made myself clear on that before. Snobbery, remember, is pretension, not merely the providing of a product of limited appeal. (Radio has shown where the anti-limited-appeal argument can lead!) Concert Hall, I am convinced, is anything but pretentious, although its ads, it must be admitted, sometimes work against its own interest here. Discount public relations. If the clientele is hoity-toity (I doubt it), then I can only suggest that it takes a tough kind of snobbery to absorb the challenging menu Concert Hall offers, and come back for more. Anyway, you notice, the company is still in business.

EDWARD TATNALL CANBY.

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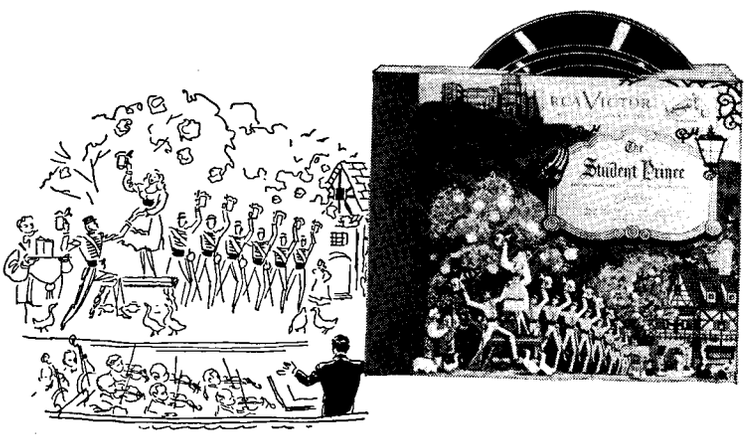

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Journalism.

Because we thought "Your Newspaper" was an important contribution to the current battle over the American press, SRL *recently published two selections from this able analysis by nine Nieman Fellows* (SRL *Sept. 27 and Oct. 4). The review of "Your Newspaper" below by an experienced newspaper editor supports our belief that the book has something unusually concrete to add to the controversy—compared, for instance, with the honest but inconclusive recommendations of the recent report of the Commission on Freedom of the Press. Our reviewer calls on his own experience to explain why he thinks the ideal newspaper blueprinted by the authors would fail. Perhaps he is right. In any case, we are dealing with facts and details here—and if there is to be a reform of the press, this is the way it will come about.*

A Newspaperman's Newspaper

YOUR NEWSPAPER. By 9 Nieman Fellows, 1945-46. Edited by Leon Svirsky. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1947. 202 pp. $2.75.

Reviewed by HARRY T. SAYLOR

THIS book departs from the orthodox, turn-the-rascals-out school of journalistic criticism. It does a thorough job of documenting the frailties and foibles of newspapering. It exposes some good deeds which shine from the plushiest sanctums.

But it does more. After demolishing the fretwork and decayed joists in the House of Journalism, the Nieman Fellows draw a blueprint for a new edifice. This is a performance not attempted before in the ancient pastime of pillorying the press. The authors admit it is a risky business. They understate.

During twenty-eight years of editing newspapers, my associates and I never produced a single issue that approached our "ideal." So we passed many happy hours together drawing blueprints. Our specifications were strangely similar to those of the Nieman Fellows. Some of our reforms were put into practice. Many of them ran smack into a stone wall so thick we couldn't butt through.

The wall was the inexorable mass production system of today's newspaper industry which makes placid captives of nearly all newspapermen. It is an element unknown to the public. It is not described in journalism textbooks. Like Topsy, it "has just growed up," slowly and subtly over many years until it is now accepted as we accept the sun and the rain. Its effects are seldom comprehended even by the most practical editorial people. Printers, circulators, advertising salesmen wrestle with it every day.

The Nieman Fellows unhappily ignore it as they locate their hypothetical ideal newspaper in "a lively metropolitan area of about 1,500,000 people." Their paper is "intermediate in size . . . between full size . . . and tabloid." It has wider, easier-to-read columns than present standards. Pages are stapled so the paper "won't turn into garbage when dropped."

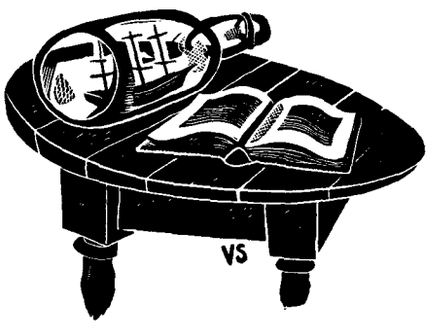
Their staff of 150 includes specialist reporters at high pay. Advertising is "stacked neatly in a squared off arrangement." Emphasis is placed on honest reporting, bright writing, unusual pictures.

Every newspaperman in his right mind would fight to work on such a newspaper. They never will. There can't be quite such a newspaper.

You can't sell advertising in a paper with wider columns than the norm. Big local stores and agencies which handle national advertising prepare their copy, mats and electrotypes by mass production for the standard, 12-em column. I knew that when my colleagues and I dummied a paper of about the same dimension as the Fellows' ideal. But I naïvely believed advertisers might be so inspired by the boldness and beauty of our design and format that they would prepare special copy to fit.

They said no, emphatically. One agency chief said: "This is as ridiculous as though you asked General Motors to process a bicycle off their Cadillac assembly line."

"Advertising stacked neatly in a squared off arrangement"? When space for ads is sold, "position" is also sold. No large advertiser will share a page with a competitor. Some insist on page 5 or back page. Stack your hypothetical ads neatly and the ads will remain hypothetical.



Staple pages together? A circulation manager told me that would probably force him to resign. His schedule is like a railroad timetable. Extra time required for stapling would cause one of two calamities: (a) editions would be so late that he would be beaten on the street by his opposition and lose many sales at once or (b) the news deadline would have to be so much earlier that the paper would be scooped regularly and lose circulation gradually.

This could go on endlessly. Many sound reforms have been aborted because they would upset the mass-production schedule. Feature syndicates, equipment manufacturers, newsprint mills, all other suppliers have standardized their products so that newspaper operations must follow a rigid pattern.

It is not an unmixed evil. It has produced newspapers faster, more efficiently, cheaper. The public shares the economies. But it has virtually ended original planning.

The Nieman Fellows bring a sharp indictment against the press, charging irresponsibility, prejudice in favor of property, a trend toward monopoly. They offer a strong case.

Is the mass production monster a factor which leads to these abuses? It might be worth a scientific study. Perhaps another book. Endowed, of course.

Harry T. Saylor, a newspaperman of wide experience, has held, among other positions, editorial posts on the Philadelphia Record *and the* New York Post.

"Tourist Guide"

PARIS HERALD: THE INCREDIBLE NEWSPAPER. By Al Laney. New York: D. Appleton-Century Co. 1947. 334 pp. $3.

Reviewed by JOHN RACKLIFFE

AL LANEY has written a superb critical history of a world-famous newspaper. Except for an occasional dubious superlative, there is nothing wrong with the book. Laney knows the *Paris Herald* intimately, and he knows just what to tell about the men and women who created it, molded it, and worked with it. He brings to his subject a sharp mind, a nice sense of proportion, and true wit. He is a deft and controlled raconteur. His stories are often sidesplitting. His

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documentation is impeccable, and invisible. He likes the *Paris Herald*, and he loves Paris.

"Paris Herald" is chock-full of the detail of Paris life—the Paris adored by foreigners. There is Harry's New York Bar. There is Isadora Duncan, on the eve of the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti, standing in vigil with a lighted taper before the American Embassay. There is Ezra Pound sending indignant letters to the *Herald*. There are the Dôme, the Coupole, the Select, the Dingo. There is Sparrow Robertson whose column Sporting Life was a daily necessity in the château life of Eugene O'Neill. The Sparrow's style, compounded of semi-literacy, clear observation, and a warm heart, made good writing. Laney quotes one column written for Thanksgiving Day of 1938 and a brief autobiographical fragment, and proves the Sparrow's distinction.

There are, if only briefly, the artists and intellectuals of *transition*. "Joyce collaborated with Antheil, who collaborated with Pound. Antheil wrote about the music of Pound. Pound wrote about the music of Antheil. Sylvia Beach sold all their publications."

But the book is, above all, the history of a newspaper and its makers. There is the younger James Gordon Bennett, who founded the *Paris Herald* in 1887, who dictated its policy, and ruled its staff with brilliant, irresponsible tyranny. Bennett considered "a dead dog in the rue du Louvre more interesting for the *Herald* than a devastating flood in China." His paper obediently reflected his views.

Almost from the beginning the *Herald* was a strange mixture of political obtuseness, technical competence, and a somewhat brash independence. And from the beginning its main reading public was the American population of Europe, floating and permanent. The paper's fortunes rose and fell with the fortunes of its readers. It mirrored their provincialism. In the tourist heyday of the Twenties the *Paris Herald* was edited to satisfy the Americans of the Right Bank hotels, the American Express, and the Chamber of Commerce—what Laney calls "this American village." The cultural experiments of the Left Bank, the political realities of an uneasy Europe were covered only if they had sensational value. The big stories were not the decay of the Weimar Republic or the distress of China in 1927. The important beats were Gertrude Ederle, Lindbergh, the Byrd expedition, and the American Legion convention in Paris, France.

The *Paris Herald* had occasional periods of political acuteness, it had its years of tremendous prosperity, but it always remained the traveling Americans' home-town paper. Al Laney's affection for the newspaper and his admiration for the brains and talent which carried the *Paris Herald* along do not blind him to its limitations.

There is one important thing missing in Al Laney's book—the people of France. He must have known that he could not squeeze them or their country into his kind of book. But one senses the absence of the stitchers in the great *ateliers*, the peasants of the Midi, the fabric-manufacturers of Lyons, the factory workers of the *banlieue rouge*. One misses what has been called, with native fullness, *"le beau doux pays de France."*

Al Laney speaks with understanding and sympathy of "the indestructible French character and the institutions founded upon it." It is against the background of this indestructibility that the *Paris Herald* has played its role, the role of the tourist guide. The American reader is greatly in Mr. Laney's debt for a splendidly coherent, informative, and entertaining account of the private life of this greatest of tourist guides.

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(Continued from page 19)

caused wonderment, and the wonderment resulted in investigation. The afternoon was magnificent. They would mow a swath, and then repair to the cellar and taste the cider. They undoubtedly observed an improvement each time they returned, for each time they lingered longer and tasted more.

In the end they were beyond physical pain, and were able to arrange a fight between them. At this point Grandfather returned home, having sold his tomatoes for a good price, and he found the two hired men down in the swale calling each other perfectly awful names, and trying to hook their scythes over each other's necks. Grandfather discharged them, but not until he had watched the fight for a time. He sat down under a tree and admired the spectacle, and felt he might never again have the chance to watch men fight with hand-scythes and he didn't want to nip opportunity in the bud. They didn't hurt each other, and Grandfather figured they were so far gone they weren't likely to. He found out the next day they'd left the spigot running, and his barrel of cider was gone forever.

—*From "The House that Jacob Built," by John Gould (Morrow).*

Buffalo Kill

THERE WERE BUFFALO all round, enormous in the murk, butting at the horse or trying to gore it (impossible if it kept its feet, of course), sometimes charging at it. Their hoofs flung dirt and clods into the hunter's eyes; his ears roared with a confusion of noises. There was no seeing what was ahead, but he had to select a victim, and at any season but calf-time the victim had to be a cow, a young one for preference. A trained buffalo horse, guided entirely by the pressure of the rider's thighs, side-stepped the sidelong charges and dodged the direct ones, coming up behind the right shoulder. When Indians coursed buffalo they used a lance or an arrow; one arrow was enough if properly placed and it was frequently driven clear through the beast so that it slid along the plain on the other side. The white man used his rifle and reloaded it on the dead run, pounding the buttplate on the saddle to seat the bullet which normally had to be rammed home. If he succeeded in that doubtful operation—pouring powder haphazardly from his horn, perhaps in a double or triple charge, and spitting into the muzzle a ball he had been carrying in his mouth—he was ready for another kill. If not, he used his pistols, less effectively. No matter: by now he was a madman and had to keep galloping, yelling, firing, till his horse was spent, his powder gone, or the bunch of buffalo dispersed as stragglers. Suddenly there was silence again. Far away other half-dozens were galloping ahead of other hunters, whose rifles might spout smoke as their companion looked up. Here and there over the plain was the fallen carcass of a buffalo, here and there a wounded beast sinking to its knees.

—*From "Across the Wide Missouri," by Bernard DeVoto (Houghton Mifflin).*

World Law or Bust

MEASURED AGAINST the infinite age of the earth and stars, the span of human existence is brief indeed. Yet in the comparatively few years that man has inhabited the planet, he has achieved great and wonderful things. From the caves where he once lived in savage ignorance, he has won his way to a nearly complete control over his natural environment. Now he has only himself to fear. He can use his new-found power to destroy himself and all that has been built and thought through the laborious centuries, or he can find a more generous existence on this earth than ever before was possible. This is the decision which we, as the living representatives of the race, must make in our time.

If war comes, it will not be because it was inevitable but because too many believed it to be inevitable. Let us remember that we are endowed with reason and imagination, that we are capable through intelligent, courageous action of influencing our destiny. That portion of humanity which lives within the borders of the United States can play a decisive part in preventing the impending tragedy. We need not watch in apathy and despair while our Government makes no real effort to end a suicidal struggle for power. Acting together through the democratic process, we can compel our leaders to adopt a policy that provides hope for the survival of ourselves and our descendants. . . . Either some measure of world government will be achieved by voluntary consent or our particlular civilization will

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be destroyed. It is not too late to choose.

—*From "Peace or Anarchy," by Cord Meyer, Jr. (Little, Brown).*

The Mountain Speaks

THERE HE SAT at the table, his glass before him, and everybody clustered around.

"You see, you get so you aren't used to daylight any more. You only see it once in a long while, a little bit, way up above. First it's there, then it isn't. Very far up there, between the stones. . . . The mountain fell down."

Through the open window the air flowed into the room. Wasps came in, too, and bees, and flies. All kinds of flies came in at the window. Some were blue and green; others little black ones made a cloud around people's heads. They looked like one of the black muslin veils that the beekeepers wear when they get honey from the hives. Antoine had one too; he sat there in it looking out at the others with his pale sunken eyes whose look seemed to meet theirs without really taking it in.

People came in, went out. The others shushed them, "Hey you, be quiet!" He paid no attention to anybody. He sat there, his look turned inward, as if he were following something going on there behind his eyes, first one picture, then suddenly another one taking its place.

"Wait a bit, it's coming back . . . the mountain fell down."

He asked, "Could you hear the noise down here, when it fell?"

"Lord! I should think we did!" said Nendaz.

—*From "When the Mountain Fell," by C. F. Ramuz (Pantheon Books).*

Theodora's Baby

THEN IT HAPPENED at last. I am going to have a baby, Fanny said. She felt that perhaps she ought to cry, and she did. She relaxed, and thought with tenderness of the tyranny she would exercise.

"I must take care of myself," she said. "Perhaps I shall send for Theodora, to help about the house."

So Theodora went to Audley, into a wilderness of parquet and balustrades. There was very little privacy. Even in her wardrobe the contemptuous laughter of maids hung in the folds of her skirts.

"God, Theodora is ugly," said Frank. "These days she certainly looks a fright."

The servants knew, and took up his contempt. Miss Goodman, an old maid, they said, a scarecrow in a

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mushroom hat. She wore long shapeless dresses of striped voile, which made her look an oblong with a head and legs.

Fanny heard laughter, she heard Frank, but she did not speak, because she did not care enough, in her condition, in a boudoir cap. She looked at her fair plump face and wiped the sweat from a wrinkle with a pink puff. She made little grimaces for her figure, but only as a matter of course. Because her figure, like her self-importance, had momentarily swelled.

Sometimes Fanny talked to Theodora about My Baby.

"You've no idea, Theo," she used to say. "It's most solemn. As a sensation, I mean."

"I don't doubt," said Theodora.

She pushed her needle through the flannel. She sat with her head bent, so that you could not see, and really, Fanny said, she sometimes wondered why she had sent for Theodora, she was less than human, she was no advantage at all.

Fanny Parrott finally had her child. It was a girl, whom they called Marie Louise.

"Sounds fancy," Frank said, out of his slow, red face.

"It's most distinguished," Fanny replied.

Theodora took the baby outside, where the landscape was less pink, and the baby learned to stare at her with solemn eyes. The baby's head trembled like a flower. It was reminiscent of the tender, unprotected moments of her own retrospective awkwardness. So Theodora loved the child. Theodora became beautiful as stone, in her stone arms the gothic child.

"She is sweet," said Fanny. "Ugly, of course. But sweet. Give her to me, Theo. My baby. My little sweet."

And at once Theodora was ugly as stone, awkwardness in her empty hands. But the child swelled round and pink on the mother's pink breast, and had all the banality of wax.

—*From "The Aunt's Story," by Patrick White (to be published by Viking Press in January).*

What's in A Sermon?

November 5, 1940.

LAST NIGHT the Democrats and Republicans closed their campaigns. Roosevelt spoke from Hyde Park in grave and pious tones. He recited a prayer and concluded with a solemn amen. Willkie did approximately the same thing. This country's taste for sermonizing is extraordinary. If in France everything comes to an end with songs, or used to, here everything is topped off with a sermon. God is always the trump card, the climax to all the fireworks. This American religiosity is unique. Detached from all doctrines and a key to everything, it is the final bath in which all acids are diluted. Is it sincere? Probably, but it cannot be called very profound.

—*From "The Making of Yesterday: The Diaries of Raoul de Roussy de Sales" (Reynal & Hitchcock).*

Narrow Margin

ONE OF THE DEEPER reasons for wanting to write to you is the growing disillusionment of today; which not only dims and obscures the present, but is trying to cloud the past.

It has seemed to me that many people do not understand the urgency of those days. Nor do I think it is sufficiently appreciated how much the British gave us in return for what we gave them, not only in loyalty and friendship, but in practical contributions.

You could not live in London in those early years and not realize how narrow was the margin of survival. It would have taken so few mistakes to bring about defeat; the miracle was how few were made and how unimportant in retrospect they were, although in war none is ever without importance, since all decisions touch life and death.

Constantly I was reminded of the old-fashioned hourglass that was part of every kitchen in my childhood. When it was first turned for timing, the grains seemed to move slowly from the full upper bowl, but as the sands sank through the narrow vortex and the grains in the upper bowl lessened, how rapid was the descent! There were many times in the early years of the war when you felt the sands would run out and all would be over. . . .

Always in times of stress it is the simple virtues that really count. In the welter and tragedy of the American Civil War, courage and kindness, common sense and a sense of humor, military competence and an abiding faith in the purpose of life gave strength and unity in advancing the dignity of man. These were the attributes that carried us through the First World War when we fought to defend democracy in the hope that the war we waged would end all war. Even in the disillusionment of facing another global conflict, we applied these same qualities of mind and heart to measure the issues involved and to sustain the national will after we had reached the decision to join with other allies to fight cruelty and

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aggression and to try once again to establish a lasting peace.

The war is over now. Often I have wanted to write you of the courage and the kindliness, the common sense, and the bits of humor and the faith that I found in men and women here, but time and circumstance have not permitted. I have wanted to tell you the story of the war from the Embassy as I saw it, and so at long last I am sending you this letter from Grosvenor Square.

—From "Letter from Grosvenor Square," by John Gilbert Winant (Houghton Mifflin).

Machine Age

I AM A PRACTICAL politician. I know the facts of political life. I know that political machines, far from being anachronisms, are as modern as the combustion engine—and as indispensable. I know that urban social planning that ignores machines is as unrealistic as social planning that ignores the presence of the automobile. I know that fighting "bad" machines with hastily slapped together "fusion" tickets is as futile as expecting civilian soldiers with only three months' training to win a long war. And I also know that wherever the majority of voters work actively inside a political machine, you have a machine that represents the voters. It is as simple as that.

—From "You're the Boss," by Edward J. Flynn (Viking).

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. "Flowering Judas," by Katherine Anne Porter. 2. "The Killers," by Ernest Hemingway. 3. "The Ransom of Red Chief," by O. Henry. 4. "The Monkey's Paw," by W. W. Jacobs. 5. "Tobermory," by Saki. 6. "The Love Nest," by Ring Lardner. 7. "The Country of the Blind," by H. G. Wells. 8. "The Prussian Officer," by D. H. Lawrence. 9. "Big Blonde," by Dorothy Parker. 10. "The Happy Hypocrite," by Max Beerbohm. 11. "A Friend to Alexander," by James Thurber. 12. "A Rose for Emily," by William Faulkner. 13. "The Rich Boy," by F. Scott Fitzgerald. 14. "The Snow Image," by Nathaniel Hawthorne. 15. "The Luck of Roaring Camp," by Bret Harte. 16. "The Queen of Spades," by Alexander Pushkin. 17. "The Red Pony," by John Steinbeck. 18. "Mademoiselle Fifi," by Guy de Maupassant. 19. "A Christmas Carol," by Charles Dickens. 20. "Paul's Case," by Willa Cather. 21. "Little Miss Marker," by Damon Runyon. 22. "A Lodging for the Night," by Robert Louis Stevenson. 23. "The Man Who Would Be King," by Rudyard Kipling. 24. "The Cask of Amontillado," by Edgar Allan Poe. 25. "Miss Brill," by Katherine Mansfield.

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"THE MEANING OF TREASON"

(*Continued from page* 24)

As usual treason wears fine clothes to cover its scabies and deals in paradox. Good becomes evil, and evil good.

Most of us now realize that the hope of the world lies in internationalism, but it is an internationalism, as is the internationalism of Christianity, based upon local habitations and loves. He who cannot be faithful to his family, cannot be faithful to a wife; he who cannot be faithful to his country, cannot be faithful to mankind. Patriotism may be the refuge of scoundrels, and, in the form of unthinking nationalism it is, but properly understood it is the love, tender and discriminating, of place, and home, and people whom you know. So any ideology which seeks as its first step to destroy proper and thoughtful love of country, and tongue, and kindred, aims not at internationalism, but at the bloody and treacherous conquest of a narrow theory, and is the very matrix and culture-ground of treason. How can you increase universal love if you destroy the roots and foundations of love? How can you produce any lasting loyalty, even lasting loyalty to the coldness of an idea, if you destroy loyalty at its roots?

And so today we are witnessing the strange and sinister spectacle of world-wide treason on the part of men and women who, like blinded moths, flutter into the circle of treason under the delusion that within the orbit of treason may be found a final loyalty. And under the further delusion that the murky light which will destroy them, is in itself treacherous to the blaze which lit it. It is not. The murky light knows well why it is burning. It does not seek internationalism, and so the general welfare of mankind, it seeks the spread of its own nationalism until that nationalism becomes the internationalism of death. We have seen this paradox with Germany; and now we are seeing it again.

And people wonder why those who preach a new religion are so cruel.

This is Miss West's major thesis. Treason, as she points out, is the most mortal of sins because it is the cold logic of unrelieved egotism. It is murder and suicide combined. The ultimate destruction of life.

Nor is it confined to betraying a nation. At the other end of the scale, in its minor manifestations, treason is a very common sin. There is not one of us who has not at one time or another betrayed a friend, or a brother, or a loyalty, or a thought, or the common kinship of man. We are lucky if we have not betrayed love itself. The cock has crowed thrice for all of us. And the cock crows because we are afraid, or resentful, or envious, or think ourselves belittled, or because we imagine that we alone could make fine, not what we have, and could make fine, but what we haven't, and would not make fine if we had it.

This seems to me the most admirable and important book Miss West has written, and I realize my temerity, for it is necessary to place it in juxtaposition with that magnificent gothic and, at times, baroque, edifice "Black Lamb and Grey Falcon." But Miss

Crying Fishes

By Jean Pedrick

"Who hears the fishes when they cry?"—Henry David Thoreau.

WHO HEARS the fishes when they cry?
The current crams our cry in our cool throats
When we fight upstream under all that floats
Gone screaming by.

Who hears the agony and lust
Of this finned flail and thrust against the curling
River to make at last the spawn, the darling
Promise we must?

Who knows the death bed in the shallow,
The spread sun, the sleep and oldness.
Now we forget the wildstream coldness
And the roe will follow.

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West belongs to the small communion of those who constantly grow. Experience is invariably transmuted into further wisdom. She cannot grow old or reach a climax; for with such people the only possible climax is death. She speaks now with the purest, finest, and most modern English voice there is. The voice, magnificent, civilized, indestructible, stalwart, of what England, emerging from her ashes, is, and most assuredly will become.

This may seem adventitious, but it is not, it is germane, and Miss West, I think, consciously or unconsciously, uses the sentence that follows as a symbol of democracy. Speaking of the three places where William Joyce was tried—the Old Bailey, the Court of Appeals, and the Houses of Parliament—she says of the last, "It was the only one which was fully alive, alive like an old English or American house where sensible and pleasant people have lived for centuries, adapting it according to the knowledge of their generations."

The English mind which is capable of using these exact adjectives—"pleasant," "sensible"—where America is concerned, places no limits to its own growth, or to the growth of hope in general. It is extraordinary when you consider that Miss West has published in all only twelve books—this is the twelfth—and that with such sound brilliance she has emerged so beautifully from the early temptations of smart-aleckry to which brilliant Englishwomen are so often given. There was a time when she might very well have ended up as a feminine Noel Coward.

Unobserved by most, two most important matters have been happening in the past ten years. The first is this emergence of the unspoiled feminine mind into direct bearing and impact upon events and theories and behavior. I do not mean the behind-the-arras, bedroom "influence of women." That has always been with us and is immensely powerful, but for the most part it is sporadic, individual, sexual, and, more often than not, anarchic. I mean the release of the undistorted feminine mind, which, as I have tried to point out, is in many ways the best mind there is, unfiltered by any masculine go-between and divorced from all sex except the fundamental and beneficent fact that men are men and women are women.

The second equally important fact is the attack upon faith of the godless ideologies. If the citadel is strong, strength grows with attack; cohesion from the awakening to danger. In our present mood of sullen disillusion and despair it is difficult to perceive good rising above the horizon, but it is there.

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Special Studies.

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Remedies for the World's Ills

OUR EMERGENT CIVILIZATION. Edited by Ruth Nanda Anshen. New York: Harper & Bros. 1947. 339 *pp.* $4.50.

Reviewed by RUSHTON COULBORN

NOT all of the fourteen writers in this collection of essays are conservatives. Yet the volume as a whole may be regarded as an attempt, and a very serious one, on the part of conservative thinkers to prescribe remedies for the world's ills. Thus the two economists, John M. Clark and Frank Knight, writing respectively on "Economic Principles of the New Civilization" and "The Future of Free Society," are to be described as highly critical conservatives. Their counsel is of considerable value and the more impressive by their substantial agreement, but, in my judgment, it is too much influenced by American conditions to be an adequate prescription for the world at large. A broader essay is one by Harry W. Laidler on "The Changing Functions of the Modern State," but this is such elementary, background material that it is hard to see how it could be of use to readers equipped to profit from the rest of the book.

Most of the other essays are broadly philosophical, and there is a general search for ground for values, even though the feebler efforts degenerate into mere asseveration of belief in values. George P. Adams's "Ethical Principles of the New Civilization" is a case of the latter; it appears to be a somewhat reluctant and evasive restatement of dualism. William Pepperell Montague in "The Future of Theism" claims to be a dualist, but is not. He "identifies the mental [the soul] . . . with the potential energies in the brain," these energies being actual physical energies as known to the physical scientists—a "physical soul," as he says. Discerning then the principle of entropy operating in the universe, he deduces that at some time the universe must have been "wound up" (as Eddington might have said) to permit its "running down" in the known course of inorganic evolution. Mind, or at least life, is the only agency known to us which appears to resist entropic running down; *ergo* God. A delightful little intellectual exercise, this essay, but, I am afraid, frivolous.

Jacques Maritain writes an intuitionalistic blend, mediated, it would seem, by Kierkegaard, of medieval realism and modern existentialism, which has somehow come out optimistic. I cannot take this seriously, and nobody need take seriously Werner Jaeger on "The Future of Tradition," a bromide whose only merit is its shortness. It is necessary to take G. E. G. Catlin seriously on "The New Basis for World Politics"; he reaches a characteristic solution for those problems, which seems to me to be a counsel of despair, quite probably justified. With this should be coupled F. S. C. Northrop's contribution, a summary of results of his recent book ("The Meeting of East and West: An Inquiry Concerning World Understanding"). He has achieved the profound perception that the philosophies of different cultures are in the main founded on interpretation of natural fact, and that it should therefore be possible to reconcile conflicts between them by reference to the large modern knowledge of nature. The trouble is that time, a very long time, is of the essence of such a reconciliation. Just as events are likely to move too fast for a reconciliation to be achieved, so Catlin's characteristic escape from disaster is hardly likely to appeal to men until they have encountered disastrous events. It could prove, therefore, that in these two essays taken together there is contained a prophecy, unintentional on the part of the authors, of descent into the abyss and thereafter of ascent again out of it.

The three most important essays in the book could be of greatest importance for some future generation living during ascent out of the abyss. So, Ananda Coomaraswamy sees the West's technology without art steadily and sees it damned; that is valuable counsel for a newly growing society, but his subsequent advocacy of annihilation of the self exemplifies the fundamental suicidalness of Indian thought, which is probably the explanation of the recurring disasters of Indian history. Brand Blanshard in "Can Man Be Reasonable?" makes a valiant and witty attack on irrationalism even if he does not perhaps dispose finally of the logical positivists.

The best in the volume is Julian Huxley's "The New Evolution." The argument, that ethics and conscience are intrinsic to the process of social evolution, is not wholly new, but here it is given with authority and great breadth of scholarship. It is, in my opinion, decisive, and it renders quite unnecessary the theism and the various resorts in some of the other essays to dualism, real or alleged.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 714)

WALT WHITMAN:
THANKS IN OLD AGE

Thanks....
For all the brave strong men....
Who've forward sprung in Freedom's help, all years, all lands.
.....A special
laurel ere I go to Life's war's chosen ones,
The cannoneers of song and thought—the great artillerists—
The foremost leaders, captains of the soul.
.....a soldier's, traveler's thanks.

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American Schism

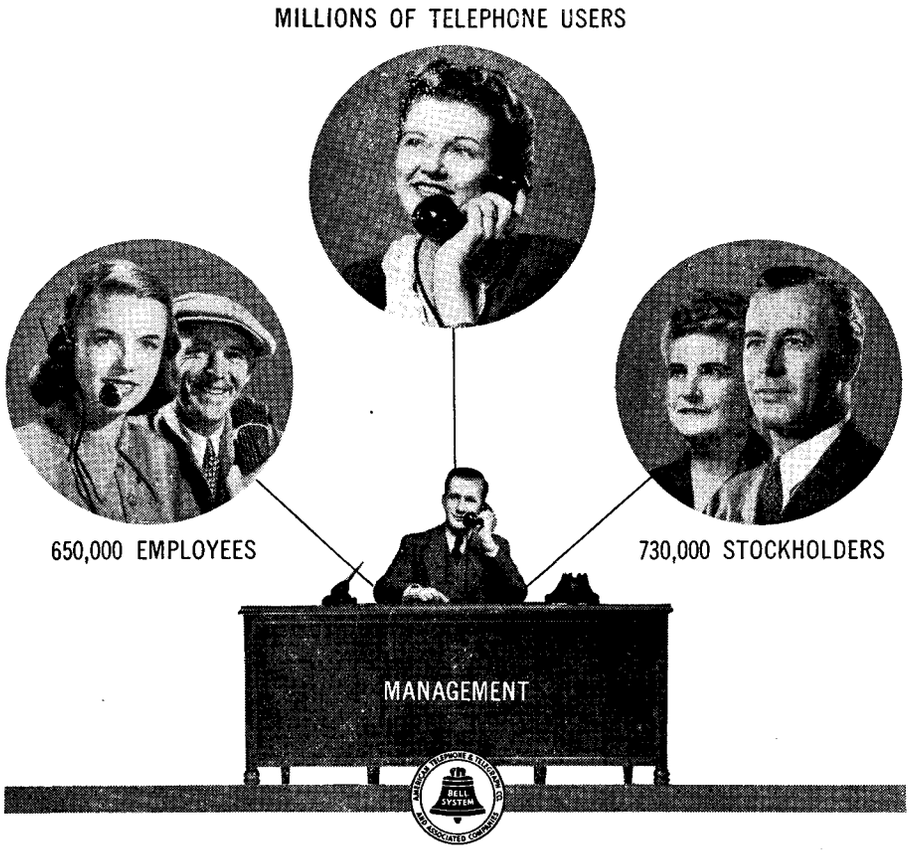
THE POLICE AND MINORITY GROUPS. A manual prepared by Joseph D. Lohman. Chicago: Chicago Park District. 1947. 133 *pp. No price given.*

Reviewed by EDWARD C. LINDEMAN

IF THE strengths and weaknesses of American civilization were weighed and enumerated, I feel sure the latter column would be headed by *racism.* Myrdal was right when he named this persistently anti-democratic mood and tendency "An American Dilemma." The practice of racial inequality sends a sharp wedge straight through the American character resulting in divided personalities and a schismatic society. Sensitive observers long ago began to feel that this might be the rock upon which the great experiment would founder and fail.

Our haunting sense of guilt has become more pronounced since we were reluctantly drawn into a war with the world's most blatant *racist,* Adolph Hitler. Since that event an avalanche of books, pamphlets, conference reports, novels, essays, dramas, and poems has descended upon us, all reminders of the fact that we have been guilty of deep-seated prejudices. Although I have made a few modest contributions to this flood of words, I have for some time been bothered by the uneasy feeling that the hidden purpose of these words was to avoid action. On this account I have been on the lookout for examples of deeds such as state statutes and local ordinances forbidding discrimination in employment, housing, et cetera, elimination of discriminatory practices in trade unions and the abolition of quota systems in schools and colleges; I had come to believe that one illustration of action would now bring more faith and courage than any mass of guilt-laden words. If, therefore, my enthusiasm for "The Police and Minority Groups" seems excessive, readers will understand the reason. I fairly pounced upon this slender volume when I learned that it represented a record of an actual experiment designed to train policemen in the subtle art of human relations, more concretely, race relations. With slight alterations, the training material included could be used with profit for training bus drivers, ushers, headwaiters, hotel clerks and teachers, preachers, social workers, nurses, doctors—in short, all persons whose necessary tasks bring them into contact with various racial and minority groups.

This is what they would learn if



THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MANAGEMENT IN THE BELL SYSTEM

IT USED TO BE that the owners of practically every business were themselves the managers of the business. Today, as far as large businesses are concerned, a profound change has taken place. In the Bell System, for instance, employee management, up from the ranks, and not owner management, is responsible for running the business.

This management has been trained for its job in the American ideal of respect for the individual and equal opportunity for each to develop his talents to the fullest. A little thought will bring out the important significance of these facts.

Management is, of course, vitally interested in the success of the enterprise it manages, for if it doesn't succeed, it will lose its job.

So far as the Bell System is concerned, the success of the enterprise depends upon the ability of management to carry on an essential nation-wide telephone service in the public interest.

This responsibility requires that management act as a trustee for the interest of all concerned: the millions of telephone users, the hundreds of thousands of employees, and the hundreds of thousands of stockholders. Management necessarily must do the best it can to reconcile the interests of these groups.

Of course, management is not infallible; but with its intimate knowledge of all the factors, management is in a better position than anybody else to consider intelligently and act equitably for each of these groups —and in the Bell System there is every incentive for it to wish to do so.

Certainly in the Bell System there is no reason either to underpay labor or overcharge customers in order to increase the "private profits of private employers," for its profits are limited by regulation. In fact, there is no reason whatever for management to exploit or to favor any one of the three great groups as against the others and to do so would be plain stupid on the part of management.

THE BUSINESS cannot succeed in the long run without well-paid employees with good working conditions, without adequate returns to investors who have put their savings in the enterprise, and without reasonable prices to the customers who buy its services. On the whole, these conditions have been well-met over the years in the Bell System.

Admittedly, this has not been and is not an easy problem to solve fairly for all concerned. However, collective bargaining with labor means that labor's point of view is forcibly presented. What the investor must have is determined quite definitely by what is required to attract the needed additional capital, which can only be obtained in competition with other industries.

AND in our regulated business, management has the responsibility, together with regulatory authorities, to see to it that the rates to the public are such as to assure the money, credit and plant that will give the best possible telephone service at all times.

More and better telephone service at a cost as low as fair treatment of employees and a reasonable return to stockholders will permit is the aim and responsibility of management in the Bell System.

Walter S. Gifford

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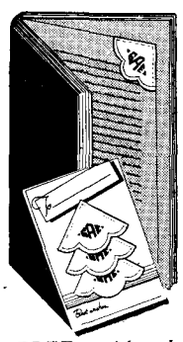

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they should pursue a course such as was given to the police of Chicago's Park District: (a) that race relations have a worldwide as well as a neighborhood significance, (b) minority-group frictions and conflicts are intimately related to population, distribution, housing, delinquency, infant mortality, educational opportunity, disease and insanity, (c) racial attitudes and discriminations when based upon height, shape of head, blood, skin color and other external factors, are falsely conceived and bear no relation to scientific fact, (d) racial tensions arise from type-situations in employment, housing, recreation, and administration of public services, (e) the police officer plays a strategic role in both prevention and mitigation of racial tensions, and finally (f) the law is definitely on the side of those whose aim and purpose is equality. I have no way of knowing how effective the teaching was in the six sessions attended by the police, but the record of its content is here given in prose which is straightforward and carries the air of scientific authenticity.

The project as a whole offers still another illustration of that fine collaboration between social scientists of the University of Chicago and its community to which we have become accustomed. Professor Louis Wirth furnished the excellent maps depicting various environmental factors conditioning race relations, and Professor Joseph Lohman prepared the manual of instruction.

Nothing, it seems to me, would more concretely demonstrate our will to move forward in eliminating minority-group discriminations than a widespread imitation of Chicago's example.

Night Thoughts

By Alex Austin

THE night bends the delight of our desire
To whatever way it wishes
While it fills the sky
With moon and stars and petals
Flying from the flowers
In the wind.

The night is a lonely creature
Walking always by itself,
Taking each lover by the hand
And showing the dark way
To death and dreams.

The night is the loneliness
All lovers feel
As they approach the sleep
They did not want to come too soon.

The night is like someone
Waiting outside my window
In the winter
Wondering when I will die.

Cloud-Cuckoo-Land

THE MISINTERPRETATION OF MAN. By Paul Roubiczek. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1947. 306 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by ASHER BRYNES

IT IS a fact that we are now almost half way through the twentieth century. It is also a fact that we are much confused; there is nothing outrageously implausible in the assertion that "we are still living in the world of thought of the nineteenth century." The further assertion, however, that our hands and feet do the devil's work in this era because our heads are full of the mistaken notions of a past era, requires exact proof. It will not do to say (as does Mr. Roubiczek) that "we uphold convictions in which we no longer believe."

What is a belief, a conviction, a faith? How does one recognize these things in others when they are not our beliefs, convictions, and faiths? The rough but sufficient test of their validity as such is that men will die for them; and it is one of the sorry distinctions of our time that an exceptional number of men have perished in it for a variety of beliefs. If we are Christians of Mr. Roubiczek's evangelical persuasion we may hold that these beliefs were erroneous, but to contend that they were not beliefs at all is to deny the power of faith itself and thus lock the doors to the truth that we otherwise strive—and for that reason necessarily fail—to communicate. We cannot insist that the essence of Christianity lies in the crucifixion, and insist at the same time that the martyrdom of man is meaningless.

Nevertheless, Mr. Roubiczek feels he must do so because his complementary conviction is that some form of socialism is inevitable; he is a Christian-Socialist, and his treatise throws much light on the psychology of fellow-traveling. Once he assumes the imminence of bureaucracy, which is secular, the jump to theocracy, which is truly divine, seems just a little leap, hardly more than a stride. However, the ruins of Marx's dialectic die in his way. He must therefore redogmatize it to serve his evangelical purpose, and to do this he must prove that more than Marx was wrong.

When Marx turned Hegel's dialectic upside down and worked it from the other way (the materialistic) end, he little thought he would one day be pitted against *his* predecessor in a third dialectical revolution; but here the most fundamental of his notions, the one which is implied in every line he wrote, the assumption that *he* had hold of the final argument, is trumped

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in a particularly cruel style. By inverting Hegel, says Mr. Roubiczek, Marx did not correct Hegel's errors. On the contrary, he made the same in reverse.

In other words, neither the idealistic nor the materialistic versions of the dialectic will serve. What is required is a "recognition of the action and reaction of spirit and matter." Whether you argue from things to thought, or thought to things, you are bound to be wrong. Hegel saw the divine will manifested in the state, and his views produced Hitler; Marx saw the divine will manifested in society, and his views produced Stalin. The common fault of both these operations of the dialectic was that they were earth-bound: the ideas of men suffer from the same mortal defect as the more concrete products of human labor. God is the other term of the dialectic. Between God and man, dialectically considered, we can establish the final synthesis.

The amusing thing about the argument is that while the urgency with which he presents it—as Mr. Roubiczek successfully demonstrates—is of the twentieth century, its form is of the fifth century before Christ; it is pre-Christian; and this latest effort to hang us midway between heaven and earth was dealt with by a contemporary writer called Aristophanes, in a comedy about a place named cloud-cuckoo-land.

But we seem to have forgotten for the moment that Mr. Roubiczek, in dealing with the nineteenth century and its "misinterpretation of man," is really concerned with its influence on the twentieth. He says that "the colossal progress of capitalism is connected with the increasing poverty of the majority of mankind." Who has been actually impoverished by capitalism: in plain language, *who eats less?* He says "the steadily increasing surplus supply of goods actually causes the greatest misery." But there can be no acute surplus of any commodities, by definition, unless prices are fixed; and price-fixing is not a capitalistic device. This confusion is worse confounded by the fact that wherever all prices are fixed there never seems to be any surplus of goods, nor for that matter of men; everybody works and everybody is hungry.

Consequently when Mr. Roubiczek says, "Marx is the first man to recognize clearly the nature of the economic process," we are inclined to doubt because one thing is certain: Mr. Roubiczek does not recognize it. And when, finally, he says that, "As values, all goods are only certain amounts of congealed working hours," we end by doubting his Christianity, for this would make us out to be horses and not humans.

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AMBASSADOR TO THE COSMOS

(*Continued from page* 17)

Harvard has always handled its Jews in a manner far less likely to excite public indignation. The university does not exclude them, except in such ways as the awarding of scholarships, the enforcement of regional quotas, and the like. It admits them and surrounds them, amoeba-like; they just disappear within the university. It has never been necessary for any Harvard official to announce, as former President Hopkins of Dartmouth was forced to announce, a policy on the limitation of Jewish students. It's all in the family. Conant, indeed, may not even know that, in one of the most socially inclined of the Harvard houses, the youths who apply for admittance are sifted in order to assure a representative cross-section—public or private school, scholar or athlete, Easterner or Westerner, student of science or of literature, social figure or social cipher, and, finally, gentile or Jew? The last question is as natural as any of the others, except for the fact that the house master and his staff, doubtless to purge the situation of any emotional overtones, say "X" instead of "Jew."

CONANT'S class at Harvard was '13, which means that he has been connected with the university, man and boy, for thirty-eight years. He has never been employed anywhere else, though, after his graduation, he did some laboratory work in a steel mill in Philadelphia. The management offered him a steady job, but he turned it down. He slipped into the Spartan pattern of university life, which rewards few people but did reward him—rewarded him at an unusually early age, and after relatively little drudgery. In 1916 he became an instructor, in 1919 an assistant professor, in 1925 an associate professor, and in 1929 a full professor. This is the goal of college teachers. Conant rose one step higher, to the chairmanship of his department, before becoming president of Harvard. He was then forty.

It is difficult to say exactly what a university president does. One thing is certain—he really presides, much more so than presidents of other organizations. He presided six times during a recent, typical five-day workweek. Monday, from nine-thirty in the morning to three in the afternoon, he attended a meeting of the corporation; from three to four he dictated notes on decisions reached during the meeting; from four to five he conferred with various deans; at six-thirty, after an interval to allow him to get into dinner clothes, he turned up to preside at a dinner-table faculty meeting of one of the graduate schools. Tuesday, from ten to one, he had a series of fifteen-minute conferences with deans and professors; he conferred with a university committee during luncheon; at four he presided at a meeting of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences; and at six-thirty he was due at the Eastern Middlesex Harvard Club for dinner and a talk. Wednesday, after a morning of brief conferences, he lunched with some deans, breaking away at two o'clock to preside over a meeting of the Engineering School faculty; dinner (which almost always means an after-dinner talk) was with the Harvard Engineering Society. Thursday he spent presiding: over the appointments committee of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, from ten until three; over the Faculty of the School of Education from four to five; and at dinner, over the Faculty of the School of Business. Friday morning was devoted to conferences with the university staff about recent appointments to the faculty; luncheon was with the Cambridge Chamber of Commerce; during the afternoon he consulted with representatives of the Medical School Faculty; and he dined at one of the undergraduate houses.

Beer is Conant's favorite dissipation. He accepts a cocktail at a reception or dinner but usually manages not to drink it. Likewise, he will accept an after-dinner cigar or, if ladies are present, a cigarette; but he is not a steady smoker. His favorite sport is mountain-climbing, and he was once enthusiastic enough about skiing to break his collar-bone attempting it. He married early—Mrs. Conant is the daughter of the late Professor Theodore Richards, an atomic-weights expert — and has two sons, both of whom served in the recent war. In 1942 the Conant family moved out of the big, old house in the corner of Harvard Yard where the president traditionally lives, and took a smaller place. At the same time Conant arranged to have his salary substantially cut. His scale of living is modest; when he and Mrs. Conant used to vacation in Europe, for instance, they always went tourist class.

During the tense year before the United States got into the war, Conant was an outspoken and influential interventionist. Early in 1940, during the "phony war" interlude, he went on record to the effect that we need not get into the war, or even

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seek a foreign policy; but in the summer, after the fall of France, he took to the radio to urge "every action possible to insure the defeat of Hitler." Subsequent public statements made it plain that these actions, as he saw it, consisted of universal conscription, all-out aid to England, and finally a declaration of war. Seven months before the bombing of Pearl Harbor he said: "The hour for action has clearly struck."

Conant was present at what may well turn out to be the most significant moment in history — the successful atomic bomb test held in the New Mexico desert in July 1945. In the long perspective of history, as future historians will see him, there is certainly something arresting in that unmistakably academic figure lying on the ground, his light but conservative summer suit protected against the sand by a spread-out tarpaulin, shaken briefly by the blast of total destruction. For four years, as a member of the "top policy group" the other members of which were the President, the Vice-President, the Secretary of War, the Chief of Staff, and Dr. Vannevar Bush, Conant had patiently worked to bring about this miracle, his particular task being to coordinate information from the various units, evaluate progress, and act as contact man between the government and the scientists. The striking thing about the Conant in this desert scene was his calm. To be sure, he did shake hands with several of his colleagues when it was all over, but this was no more than a permissible gesture under such circumstances. An eager reporter, striving for a cosmic note, once asked Conant if he had had any qualms before the detonation—any irrational fear, for example, that the entire universe of atoms might unravel? "No . . . Oh, no. I knew those fellows had it all figured out." It was just a lab demonstration too big for any earthly lab.

THE most impressive thing about the atomic bomb is its effect on the people who invented and manufactured it. It has scared them clean out of their wits; they have deserted their laboratories and run screaming through the streets, repenting and calling upon others to repent. It might be supposed that the man who was so keen to arouse public opinion to the menace of fascism would be equally enthusiastic about sounding a warning on atomic destruction, but Conant has chosen to snub the scientists who have banded together for this purpose. The most articulate group of Manhattan Project scientists, and the ones who consider themselves primarily responsible for the current menace of

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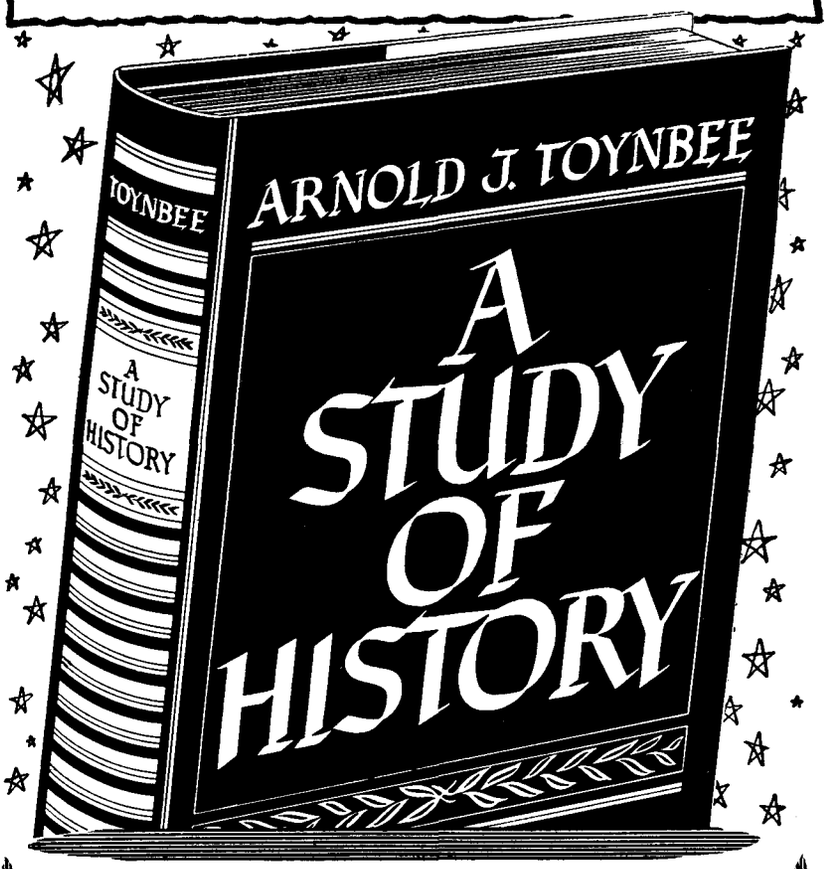

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the atomic bomb are the physicists. Conant never misses a chance to whittle them down to what he considers a proper size.

"Theoretical physicists, experimental physicists, chemists, engineers, production men were all forced to cut corners and merge their efforts," he has said. "No one can say which group played the decisive role. How important a part the chemical engineer, the electrical engineer, and the production man has in this whole atomic bomb business is still only faintly understood by the general public. Commentators write as though a few hundred physicists in a few laboratories were all that was needed. As a matter of fact, a vast mobilization of the great technical skill of many industries was an absolute requirement." Reminded that the physicists, while the bomb was still in the experimental stage, had petitioned the War Department not to use it against a city, Conant said that he had heard of the petition; personally, he added, he believed that we should have dropped a couple more bombs on Japan.

CONANT simply isn't afraid of the atomic bomb, or if he is he won't admit it. Where one side tries to bring home the impressiveness of the atomic bomb by pointing out that it concentrates in one plane the destructive power of a thousand B-29's laden with ordinary high explosives, the other side, led by Conant, uses the same comparison to prove the opposite: an atomic bomb is just the plain old B-29 multiplied by a thousand. It was this course of thought which resulted in Conant's sponsorship of the May-Johnson Bill, which would have given the military complete control of atomic knowledge.

Everybody who has done any organized thinking on the subject applauds Conant's public utterances about the "secret" of the atomic bomb. He says flatly that there is no secret, just a great amount of technical information. "To impart this information to another nation would require a visit to this country of several hundred technical experts for a period of many weeks, and the transmission of a freight car load of blueprints." He is in favor of sharing our knowledge with the rest of the world, including Russia (who will, he estimates, figure it all out for herself within fifteen years at the outside). As for war prevention, he is a periodical-inspection adherent, looking to the United Nations for the necessary police power.

Conant recognizes a responsibility on the part of the scientist to warn the public about the possibility of atomic destruction. "Yet it is difficult," he muses, "to avoid either gross exaggerations or gross understatements." The public is in the position of a diabetic patient before the days of insulin. It has to be warned seriously enough so that it will take some preventive action, but not so seriously that it will give up in despair. The fact that hundreds of scientists *have* given up in despair seems not to have shaken Conant. His faith is reinforced by the obvious impossibility of any man-made reaction disturbing the sturdy arrangement of atoms which is Harvard University.

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Not Sins but Mistakes

THE STRANGE LIFE OF LADY BLESSINGTON. By Michael Sadleir. New York: Farrar, Straus & Co. 1947. 335 pp. $4.

Reviewed by GEORGE DANGERFIELD

IT IS NOW nearly a hundred years since Margaret, Countess of Blessington, died. She lies buried under a gray stone pyramid in the churchyard at Chambourcy in the Ile de France: and beside her lies the body of Alfred Count D'Orsay. A visitor to this tomb might perhaps remember that Walter Savage Landor had mourned Lady Blessington in verse, and that D'Orsay had made a bust of Lamartine. He would be more apt to recollect, though somewhat hazily, that these two were the leading figures in one of the lesser scandals of the early nineteenth century. It is to the elucidation of this scandal and its consequences that Mr. Sadleir's charming and distinguished book is dedicated.

One certainly welcomes a revised edition of this book, not merely because it gives us a picturesque glimpse of what might be called the Age of Sensibility, but also because it gives us an opportunity to propound two very interesting questions. One is: Is there a retribution for sin in this life? Since nobody is agreed upon the nature of sin, the answers are all different. The tragedian says one thing, the poet another; sociology, psychology, revelation, common sense—all raise their voices. But, oddly enough, there is no debate. For the answers, though different, return a general affirmative. Lady Blessington, if she could speak from the tomb, would certainly say Yes: but she would add (since she was neither a religious, nor a philosopher, nor a penitent) that hers were not sins but mistakes. D'Orsay, in death as in life, would reply with a shrug and a smile. He would say that he was not interested in conundrums.

The second question is: Do not those people whom a privileged society rejects become either the agents or the symbols of the decline of that society? The question is rather grandiose; but common sense (if we consult only that) would seem to reply again in the affirmative. In this respect, the last years of Lady Blessington are of great interest.

But let us first glance at the Blessington-D'Orsay scandal. In the year 1818 Mrs. Michael Farmer (née Margaret Power of Tipperary) regularized

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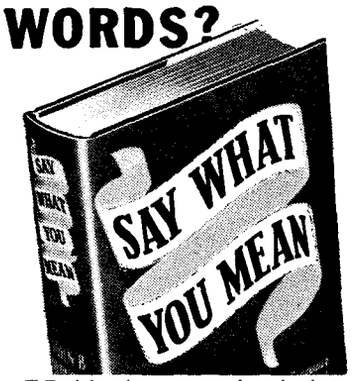

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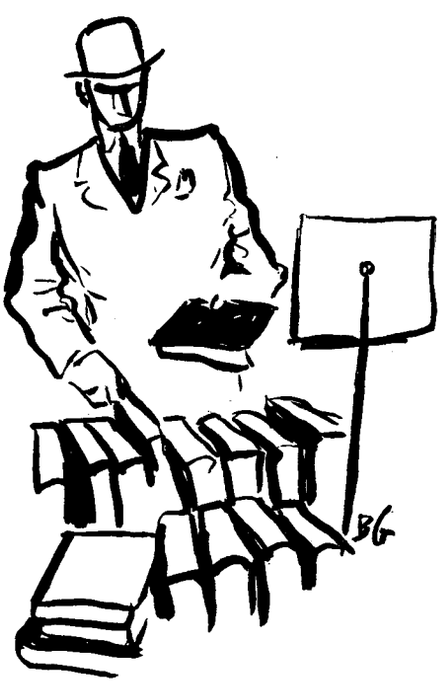
by marriage her five years' relationship with Charles John Gardiner, first Earl of Blessington. In 1821 the Blessingtons became acquainted with Alfred D'Orsay, a handsome young Frenchman, of dandified appearance, artistic tastes, and most agreeable manners. The three became inseparable friends. It was during their prolonged stay in Europe that Lord Blessington conceived the idea of marrying one of his daughters (by a previous marriage) to his good friend D'Orsay. In 1827 this scheme was brought to fruition; Lady Harriet Gardiner, aged sixteen, was summoned from Ireland; and at Naples the pair were united. The marriage was never consummated; the frightened little bride shrank into the background; and the D'Orsay-Blessington trio went on as before. By acquiescing in this sacrifice of her stepdaughter to D'Orsay's prospects, Lady Blessington committed an act of cruel indifference for which she cannot be excused and which she was afterwards to expiate in long years of disappointment and drudgery.

After the earl's death in 1830, Lady Blessington and her equivocal household arrived in London, where she made a direct assault upon the heart of society. Both the countess and the insouciant D'Orsay should have known that, sooner or later, someone would accuse her of having married her paramour to her stepdaughter; and, sooner rather than later, someone did. In July 1831 the tidbit appeared in the *Satirist*, in the form of a riddle by Lord Glengall. In August 1831 Harriet D'Orsay suddenly fled from her stepmother's house. Immediately the female side of society turned upon Lady Blessington. Genuine disapproval, jealousy, venom, fear were mingled in the attack. We may well ask ourselves now was it because Lady Blessington was "not a good woman" that she was thus ostracized and ruined? Or was it because she had tried to be a great lady?

Mr. Sadleir makes it clear that Lady Blessington and D'Orsay were never lovers. Three months of marriage with Mr. Farmer had given her a permanent distaste for the physical side of love, and she was therefore by choice and by temperament as chaste as any woman in London. D'Orsay was naturally cool. His energies were quite remarkable of their kind, but they were purely social. As for the flight of Lady Harriet, which precipitated the scandal, it was D'Orsay who was responsible for that. It was he who (unknown to Lady Blessington) tried to drive his wife into a compromising relationship with his friend Lord Uxbridge, in order that he might have grounds for divorcing her, and thus lay his hands upon her fortune.

Lady Blessington forgave him with difficulty; but her feeling for him was maternal, she needed his companionship, and in the end she took him back. For years she struggled with her own debts and with D'Orsay's extravagance; for years her evening parties in what Thackeray called the "dear old drawing room" (he meant the library) went on. But her circle was composed of literary men, who truly loved her for her beauty and her cheerful ways, but who could not in the thirties and forties, in the mere dawn of the Victorian Age, counteract the hatred of a Lady Jersey or the sneers of a Charles Greville.

And yet, in the end, she had her revenge. In her later years she was obliged for financial reasons to edit two of those fatuous Annuals in which people of the first rank spread their literary efforts before the new, eager, middle-class reading public. The Annuals, with their thin drizzle of simpering pictures and silly poems, were a minor indication that somewhere a leak had been sprung in the great ark of aristocratic pride. And it is surely no coincidence that these Annuals flourished in the years between the passing of the Reform Bill and the repeal of the Corn Laws, years which marked the political decline of the great landed families. Thus Lady Blessington, as editress, became a small but eloquent symbol of the downfall of those very people who had so complacently observed or so eagerly hastened her own ruin. She has her niche in English history: and to the second question as well as to the first, her life replies with a faint but still audible Yes.



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John Paul Jones, Ace Navy Man

THE FIRST CAPTAIN, The Story of John Paul Jones. By Gerald W. Johnson. New York: Coward-McCann. 1947. 312 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by FLETCHER PRATT

BOTH in itself and for the effect it must inevitably have, this is one of the healthiest books to appear in some time—and before anyone gets the idea that "The First Captain" is being boosted as a specimen of uplift, let it be added that the adjective is used as a metaphorical means of saying that the book is full of clear thinking and interesting reading. That much was to be expected from Gerald W. Johnson, to be sure. He is one of the most competent historians now operating; competent not only in the sense in which the craft union often misuses that word, to indicate a man who does painstaking research into original documents, but in the wider sense of being able to convey the fact that history is made up of the actions of living people who are sometimes subject to obscure compulsions and irrational impulses.

The healthy (and slightly surprising) thing is that such a talent should have been applied to such a subject. In the first place, ever since the literati of the Twenties decided that World War I was fought to preserve the integrity of the Morgan investments, it has been considered a disgrace in academic circles to say anything favorable about the profession of arms or anyone in it. Even Allan Nevins, who ought to know better, has been moved to utter the pronouncement that the study of war constitutes improper educative material. In the second place, John Paul Jones is the most biographied man in the history of the American Navy; *a priori* it would seem impossible to discover anything new about him or to develop anything new out of materials long familiar.

Mr. Johnson has succeeded in doing both. He has investigated not only the sea captain himself, but also the men around him, especially John Adams and that bad-tempered marplot Arthur Lee, whose activities stopped so little short of treason that one wonders how he got away with it. He has also written a book which for the first time among all those biographies treats Jones's career as a unit, integrated around a central purpose and a consistent series of ideas.

In the course of this performance Mr. Johnson is led to inquire just what ideas were held by the man whom Theodore Roosevelt called a "corsair" and how far one is justified in awarding him the title of "Father of the American Navy." The general impression has been that the first captain was less a father than a benevolent uncle; that his chief service to the nascent national defense was to provide it with that tradition of unconquerable endurance represented in "I have not yet begun to fight."

Well, the general impression is wrong. Mr. Johnson makes his point and proves it right up to the nilt. John Paul Jones was not a corsair and he was anything but an unthinking man of action. He knew what he was doing, not only in tactics, but in the much more difficult art of strategy; selected precisely the point at which the application of a small amount of force would produce a great result, and he influenced the Revolutionary War and the whole history of America, not with a tradition of gallantry alone, but in a highly practical manner. Moreover, Jones's ideas were of a general significance beyond his own field and were considerably more important than the ideas of some of the pot-walloping politicians who were

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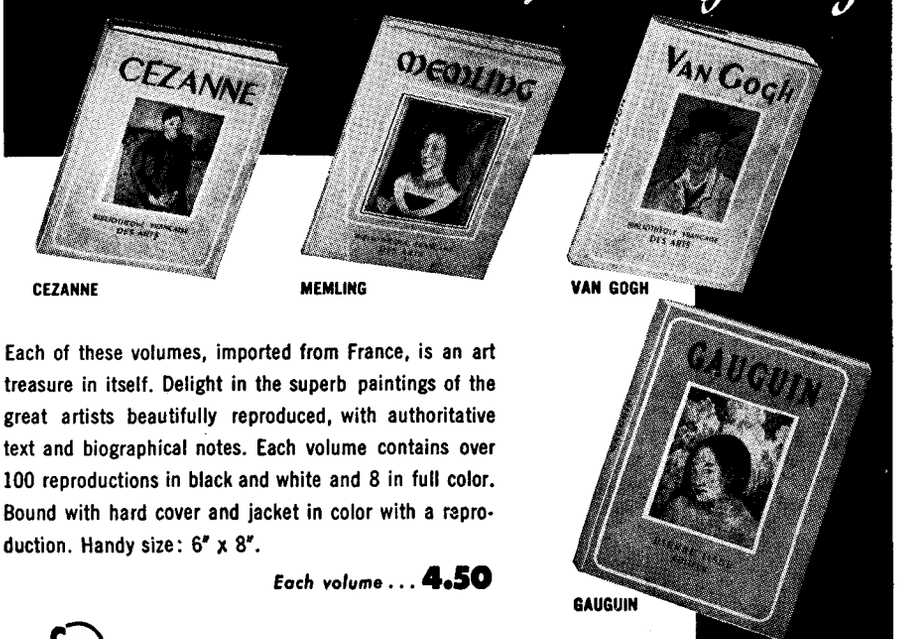

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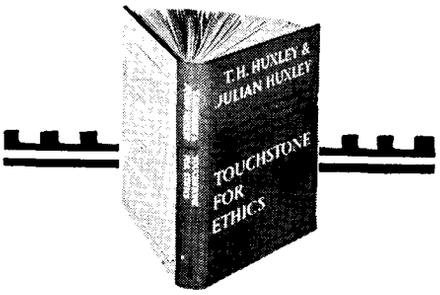

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usually looked upon as the architects of the revolution.

The argument is too long and too intricate to repeat here; consult the book. Aside from what it has to say the process will be a pleasure. American history is not often written with so keen an appreciation of dramatic values, in so fascinating a narrative style, with so many portraits of individuals worth portraying. Not Jones alone, but Franklin, John Adams, Arthur Lee, Joseph Hewes, Ezek Hopkins, and the incredible Landais come alive and stand right out of the pages. Unfortunately the book has one defect. One understands that everything is not roses in the trade these days, but the publishers ought to be thoroughly ashamed of themselves for putting out so fine a volume without either charts or an index.

Poet and Dam Builder

THE GAY GENIUS. By Lin Yutang. New York: The John Day Co. 1947. 427 *pp.* $3.75.

Reviewed by MARK GAYN

UP THE Yangtse River, past the gorges and past Chungking, there lies a town called Meishan. This is the home of the most distinguished literary family in China's history—the Family of Su, which has accounted for three of the "Eight Great Prose Masters" of the Tang and Sung Dynasties.

It is of one of them, Su Tungpo—an eleventh-century poet, statesman, yoga, puster, general, dam builder, a seeker of the elixir of immortality, and a prodigious drinker—that Lin Yutang has now written a long and thorough biography.

From the outset, Dr. Lin makes plain his affection for Su Tungpo. Su, he says in a rhapsodic passage

> felt strongly, thought clearly, wrote beautifully, and acted with high courage, never swerved by his own interests or the changing fashions of opinion. He did not know how to look after his own welfare, but he was immensely interested in that of his fellow men. He was warm, generous, never saved a penny, but felt as rich as a king. He was stubborn, garrulous but witty, careless of his speech, one who wore his heart on his sleeve; versatile, curious, profound, and frivolous, romantic in manner and classicist in letters . . . Simple and unaffected, he never cared for the trappings of dignity; when he was shackled with an office, he described himself as a harnessed deer. Living in a troublous time, he became the stormy petrel of politics, an enemy of a fatuous, selfish bureaucracy, and a champion of the people against their oppressors. With the successive emperors as his personal admirers and the empresses as his friends, Su Tungo managed to be demoted and arrested, and to live in disgrace.

With this as an outline, Lin Yutang then proceeds to sketch in the episodes in the life of this extraordinary man, from his early success as a classical scholar, to his rapid rise to the highest court and government posts, his struggle with political rivals, his spectacular ups and downs, his poetry, loves, and preoccupations, and his exile to Hainan Island and death in poverty at the age of sixty-five.

It soon becomes apparent why nine centuries later, the Chinese still remember Su Tungpo, treasure his *bon mots*, study his works, and pay fabulous amounts for originals of his poems. But it also becomes obvious that Lin Yutang strangely fails to live up to the promise of either the title, or his own enthusiastic outline. For, to tell the truth, "The Gay Genius," in contrast to Dr. Lin's earlier books, is a wordy and listless work, overloaded with long asides or irrelevant detail, and seldom displaying that kind of imaginative writing which alone can bring a character to life. Not once does Su Tungpo become the volatile, expansive, and fun-loving genius that he is presumed to be.

But if there is little gayety in the book, there is a wealth of material on one of the most famous feuds in Chinese history—the merciless and costly struggle between Su Tungpo and his associates and Wang Anshih, the great social reformer, economist, writer, and prime minister. In this feud, which followed Wang Anshih's promulgation of drastic reforms intended to benefit the farmer, break up trading monopolies, and provide a trained militia for the expected invasions, Lin Yutang sides with conservative historians. He rejects the current interpretation, which ascribes Wang Anshih's failure to the concerted opposition of the landlords and bureaucracy (including Su Tungpo), and denounces Wang for his radicalism, impractical idealism, and personal uncouthness. (Curiously, in view of Dr. Lin's denunciation of Wang Anshih as a radical, Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek's "China's Destiny" speaks well of Wang.) And perhaps because he writes with such passion, Dr. Lin succeeds in making Wang more alive than Su Tungpo.

"The Gay Genius" will find a secure place on the shelves of the students of China, both as a monumental study of Su Tungpo, and the story of an historical feud on which there is little material in English. But, unhappily, Dr. Lin has failed to infuse Su Tungpo with enough vitality and sparkle to draw a wider audience.

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(*Continued from page 34*)

to clinch your argument with them is to quote from suitable authorities. The two authorities chosen by *Life* are rather curious. The first of these is a young English painter of lively mind and some talent, named Michael Ayrton. Perhaps *Life* was forced to quote Ayrton, since their editorial comment would otherwise in many instances be a straight plagiarism of an article by Ayrton published in the English anthology "New Writing and Daylight." This article is bitterly anti-Picasso. Its views would certainly be refuted—in some cases actually have been—by living British artists of far greater consequence than Ayrton, among them Henry Moore, Graham Sutherland, and John Piper. These latter artists have all at one time or another spoken of Picasso with the greatest veneration, and have openly acknowledged their debt to him.

Life's second authority is the late Leo Stein, brother of Gertrude, who once wrote of Picasso: "He would have been a truly great artist if he had been more genuine; as it is, he's an extraordinary phenomenon." Leo Stein's rejection of Picasso dates back forty years, which is to say that he never understood anything Picasso created after the youthful Blue and Rose periods. Behind his statement, of course, is his fanatical bitterness toward his sister, one of Picasso's most eloquent champions. We are thus faced with a choice between Leo's opinion and Gertrude's. Personally I do not see how anyone can read conscientiously the works on modern painting of the two Steins and not be overwhelmingly aware that the first-rate mind and sensitivity were Gertrude's. The Blue and especially the Rose periods of Picasso have great merits admittedly. I wonder, however, whether we would pay as much attention to them as we do if they were not the work of a man who went on to more revolutionary accomplishments? I wonder whether Leo Stein can be listed as a "discoverer" of Picasso, when he failed to understand a single phase of the mature art, beginning with the African period and cubism, which has made Picasso the giant he is today?

Quite apart from the attempted deflation of Picasso as an artist, the *Life* articles dig into his private life with extraordinary ruthlessness, as they did in the case of our foremost architect, Frank Lloyd Wright. But there is no use arguing the point: either one believes that common decency forbids scandalmongering in dealing with the living great, or one does not. In its comments on Picasso, *Life* clearly does not. One records the fact sadly, for in times past *Life* has published a number of good and helpful articles on modern art. Its Charles C. Wertenbaker, who signed the longer Picasso piece, might have produced another such useful article if left to his own devices and freed of his editors' preamble; his admiration for his subject often breaks through the Peeping Tom tactics to which he was committed. As things are, *Life*'s treatment of Picasso deserves contempt—and protest.

JAMES THRALL SOBY.

Correction

James Gray, who reviewed Maxwell Geismar's "The Last of the Provincials" in *SRL* Nov. 15, was inadvertently identified as the literary editor of the *Saint Paul Pioneer Press and Dispatch* at the end of that review. Our apologies to Mr. Gray, who is well known as the literary editor of the *Chicago Daily News*.

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AMERICAN NOCTURNE

NIGHT:
And the full moon pours
A silver liquid, looted and siphoned from the hidden sun
Carousing below the horizon,
Over the sleeping land,
Over the sleeping land.
And the million messengers of the moon
Run up and down the Appalachian peaks,
The million scullions of the moon
Scramble precariously with huge barrels of silver over the Sierra Nevada summits
And a million busy servants open the spigots at the order of the moon
And the Rocky Mountains are alive with silver
And the crags of the undersized Ozarks
And the patriarchs, Rainier and Wilson,
Are showered with silver on their hoar-frost hair
And the rhythm of the liquid melts the rigidness
Of bone and sinew and muscle of the land—
And the drunken scullions pour,
And the drunken scullions pour.

And the Mississippi is a river of silver
And the Red River is a wavy, silvery snake
And the Arkansas and Ohio and the Wabash and the Missouri
And the Tennessee and the Rio Grande
Move with the silver gushing down from the mountains
And the silver flows into the sea,
And the silver flows into the sea.

Over the sleeping land
The drunken scullions of the moon pour
The silver that flows into the sea,
The silver that flows into the sea.

On the molten mesas of the Mohave,
On the Black Hills no longer tarnished,
On the beaches shimmering with the brightness of oceans and seas,
And in the urban cubicles latticed with silver bands
Americans are drunk with the liquor of the moon's scullions
And Americans are making more Americans,
And Americans are making more Americans.

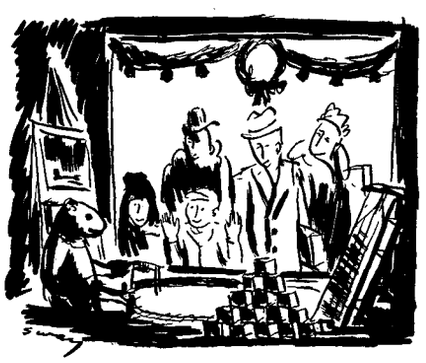
O Americans, pass on, pass on
In all such moments of passion and majesty,
When the black breasts and white breasts and the red breasts and the yellow breasts
Are heaving and are heaving and are heaving
With the exclamations of ecstasy hummed to the moon
In a hundred different tongues,
Pass on the silver chromosome,
The trait of one people lying peacefully under one common comforter of time,
Pass on the silver chromosome.

For the silver of the moon is the liquid of liberty
(And the liquid of hope
And the liquid of an undulating unity that covers the land)
That seeps into the bayous and the swamps of the south,
That seeks the skyscrapers of huge metropolitan cities, Chicago and New York and San Francisco,
That swerves into the Texas panhandle and up into Oklahoma and out through the Colorado,
That covers slum and cabin and share-cropper shack and mansion,
That flows through the whole land—
For the silver of the moon is the liquid of liberty
And it finds the levels of all people,
And it finds the levels of all people.

O Americans, making more Americans,
Pass on the silver chromosome,
Pass on this liquid liberty
That finds the levels of all people.

Dawn:
And the awakening sun, red with rage,
Hunts over the land for its stolen silver
And finds new gold instead.
And the moon's work is done
And the silver stream is spread
And the lovers leave their beds.

HAROLD ZLOTNIK.



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* * *

SOBY IT

"Surrealism is too often regarded as simply a slap in tradition's face, whereas in fact it only tried to let go of tradition's hand."—James Thrall Soby in The Fine Arts (*SRL* June 28, 1947).

Poor Lady Tradition has got herself slapped,
Her fine physiognomy newly remapped.
But ungallant, new knighted Sur Realism
Defends himself thus, from his social abysm:
Says he, "The old girl in a jealousy fit
Raised a fuss when I wanted to let go her mitt!"

WIN ECKHARDT.

* * *

I am glad to print the following from Granville Trace, Atascadero, Calif.:

> Your editorial in the Sept. 20 issue is heartening, and I wish you had said one thing more: that the Constitution does not at all guarantee religious liberty, as it should do and most people suppose it does. A simple amendment, such as, for example, "Every resident in the United States shall always have the right of complete freedom of religion, subject to the equal rights of others," would be enough. But in the preamble to the Constitution is a phrase that is far more dangerous than any omission. This is the so-called welfare clause. This clause, so far anyway as I know, has always been used to bolster injustice. It can be employed to nullify any and every right. It is no part of the Constitution, but courts and Congresses can pretend anything. There should be an amendment making the preamble non-operative, as its authors intended. I dislike personal publicity, but this—both of these things—seem to me important, and you never know when a word may start something.

* * *

God rest you, merry gentlemen . . .

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

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E. Novelette by Henry James (1898).	137 26 144 54 117 161 36 11 88
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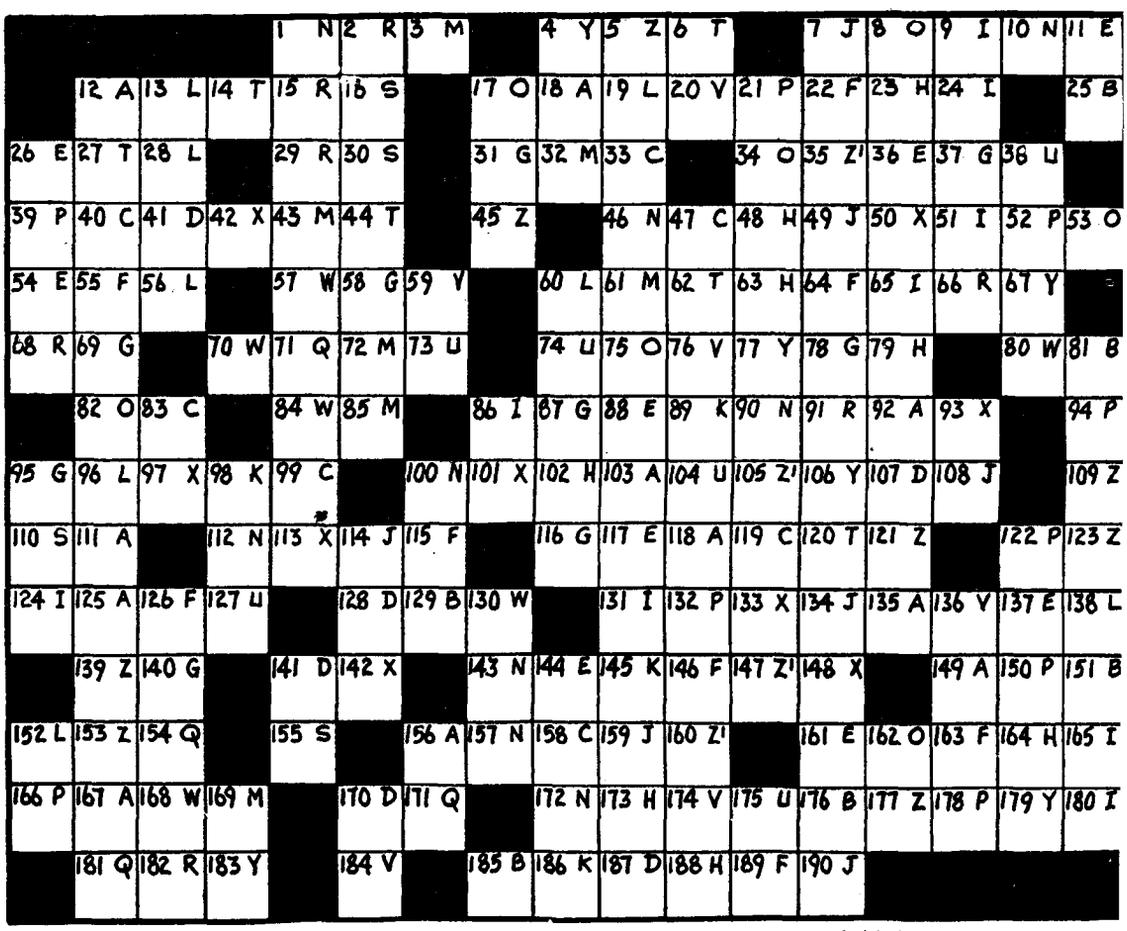
Z'. To shout; shriek.	105 35 147 160

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).



Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 82 of this issue.

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